SUPPLEMENT

TO THE

MEMOIRS

OF THE

LIFE, WRITINGS, DISCOURSES, AND PROFESSIONAL WORKS

OF

SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS, KNT.

LATE PRESIDENT OF THE ROYAL ACADEMY.

COMPRISING

Additional Anecdotes

OF HIS DISTINGUISHED CONTEMPORARIES.

BY JAMES NORTHCOTE, ESQ. R.A.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR HENRY COLBURN,

BRITISH AND FOREIGN PUBLIC LIBRARY, CONDUIT-STREET, HANOVER-SQUARE;

By J. Gillet, Crown-court, Fleet-street.

1815.

SUPPLEMENT

TO THE

MEMOIRS

OF

SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS.

Of a man so various in his knowledge, so accomplished in his manners, and so eminent in his art, as Sir Joshua Reynolds, it can scarcely ever be possible to give an adequate biography. Had the Memoir been reserved for the nine years prescribed by the poet,* still would it have appeared before the public in an imperfect state: yet I do not hesitate to confess, that if so much time for consideration and correction had been allowed, many parts might have been deemed proper to be omitted, and others more fully related, or more accurately arranged.

But the occasion on which the work appeared, was important, and, from the very short time between the conception and the execution of the attempt, any very near approach to excellence ought not to have been expected, though perhaps my endeavours have gone so far beyond mediocrity, as not to be totally unworthy of him they were intended to celebrate.

That some addition, therefore, is wanted, will readily be

* Horace.

admitted; not only as many anecdotes had escaped my own recollection, but also, as it may naturally be supposed, that the publication of a Memoir, of so distinguished a person, would lead to my receiving details of many circumstances respecting him, with which I was not before acquainted. At the time of writing, these particulars would have been of great value, but at this late period have caused me some little embarrassment in regard to the manner in which they should be disposed. Considering the very favourable reception already given, by the Public, to the *Memoirs*, I trust they will have the same indulgence towards the additions which I here offer; several of the anecdotes, and authentic papers, having been communicated to me by the kindness of friends. These, together with my own memoranda, I have now carefully arranged in a supplementary form, printed in a similar type and manner with the original work; so that those who favour these additions with their notice, may bind them conveniently with the former part.

Having given my reasons for adding a supplement to the volume, the size of which may already have been complained of as too large, I shall now avail myself of the opportunity to notice a few observations that my friends have made, on the perusal of those Memoirs, as being the most important which have come to my knowledge.

That much new matter would be looked for, in such a work, is not unreasonable; yet if, in addition to my collection of hitherto unpublished notices, I am to be blamed for having taken many circumstances, relative to Sir Joshua Reynolds, from the works of other writers, it should, at the same time, be remembered, that my intention was to give a life of him,

as complete as was in my power; therefore, in omitting those particulars which I knew to be true, only because they had already been presented to the world, though scattered about in various publications, I must have rendered my own memoir of him incomplete with respect to several important facts, which are very probably unknown to many of my readers; so that my work would have been merely an appendix to some lesser biographical sketch.

On this principle, I cannot help feeling that such facts will be considered as having an undoubted right to the place assigned them; and I should have been liable to reprehension, with stricter justice, for the omission of them.

The field of anecdote is an extensive one; yet, when we only glean, even after a plentiful harvest, our collection may be but scanty, though composed, perhaps, of some weighty ears: in fact, anecdotes are small characteristic narratives, which, though long neglected or secreted, are always valuable, as being frequently more illustrative of the real dispositions of men than their actions of greater publicity, and therefore particularly requisite in biography.

To enter at large, indeed, into such particularity of circumstances, though highly useful, might be irksome to a philosopher: still, it must be allowed that curiosity, a weakness so incidental to mankind, ceases to be a weakness, when it occupies itself respecting persons who may deserve to attract the attention of posterity.

It is universally allowed, that no kind of reading is more beneficial than history, so it is likewise admitted, that there is no class of historical writing so applicable to common instruction as biography: for the lives of individuals are generally written

more naturally, and with greater sincerity, than larger histories; nay, it may be advanced, that, in respect to benefit and application, we are much more interested in a knowledge of the lesser occurrences, even of great men's lives, than of the more exalted actions from whence they derive their glory, because it is in every one's power to imitate them as men, though very few have opportunities of emulating them as heroes.

To know what we ought to pursue, and by what road that object may be attained, is, moreover, not the sole point which ought to occupy our attention: there is another not less necessary—the knowledge of what we ought to avoid; and on that principle it appears, that even the lives of bad men may become profitable examples, to point out the misery that ever is attendant on bad conduct.

The developement of weaknesses, however, only serves to entertain the malignant, except when the detail of those weaknesses may afford instruction, either from their fatal consequences or when latent, and accompanying virtues have tended to prevent the impending misfortune. But the most useful and valuable lessons are often contained in those private papers which eminent men leave behind them, and wherein their minds have thrown off all reserve:—a few of which description will be found in the course of this supplement.

On a careful examination of the "Memoirs," and a recurrence to former recollections, I find little to add to the earlier incidents in the life of Sir Joshua,* except that I have

* Memoirs, page 5. Of that part of the family which died in infancy, one child, named Theophila, lost her life by falling out of a window from the arms of a careless nurse.

been informed, that, at the period when his father intended him for the practice of physic,* he paid some attention to the study of anatomy, in order to qualify himself for the medical profession; but, if this were true, his works, do not evince much progress in that science.

Notwithstanding his father's surprize at his first pictorial efforts,† it does not appear, that he contemplated any extraordinary consequences from them; but how gratifying would it have been to him had he lived to see the full accomplishment of his early wonder: for a man may perhaps have more pure enjoyment, through an illustrious son, than if the fame was all his own; as persons are proud of illustrious ancestors, because they think themselves possessed of all their glory, and that without sharing in their disappointments, their fatigues, or their dangers, in acquiring those honors.‡

---

* Mem. page 8. † Mem. page 10.

‡ In addition to Devonshire artists (Mem. page 3.) perhaps it may not be improper to notice Thomas Rennell, a scholar of Hudson, some years previous to the time of Sir Joshua, who was born of a good family, long settled in that county, near Chudleigh, in the year 1718. After remaining some time at the grammar school of Exeter, he was put apprentice to Hudson, the painter, in London. How long he remained in that situation, I am not told, but, at his return into Devonshire settled at Exeter, with a wife and family. In process of time, he removed to Plymouth, where he resided many years, and drew several pictures, which were much admired in that neighbourhood and gained the painter the patronage of the Duke and Duchess of Kingston, who endeavoured to draw him from his obscurity, by a promise of their house and interest in London. But this splendid offer was lost in an indolent mind; and from Plymouth Rennell went to settle at Dartmouth, where he lived in great poverty several years. He has been known to lie in his bed for a week together, with no other subsistence than a cake and water. His art had only its turn with other amusements; and if a picture was completed in twelve months, it might be considered as very expeditious. No sooner was he in possession of a few

But Sir Joshua always through life considered himself as particularly indebted to Mr. Cranch,* for the good advice by which his father was persuaded to send him to the metropolis. That gentleman possessed a small independent fortune, and resided at the town of Plympton, living long enough to be pleased by the justification of his early opinions respecting Sir Joshua's future excellence; and Reynolds, in grateful remembrance of that good opinion, many years afterwards had a handsome silver cup made, for the purpose of presenting it to

---

pounds, than any stray object that presented itself was instantly bought, though, by so doing, the necessaries of food and clothing were to be sacrificed. About two years before his death, he experienced a comfortable asylum in the bounty of J. Seale, Esq. of Dartmouth; and the manner of his end evinced his serenity, if not stoicism. Being asked whether his pains were not intense, he replied—"No; that they were such feelings as he could not describe, having never felt any thing of the kind before:" then wishing his friend a good night, turned his head aside and expired, October 19th, 1788.

The knowledge of Mr. Rennell was universal; for there was hardly a science that did not come within the sphere of his comprehension. As a painter, he is said to have possessed merit, particularly in the draperies of his portraits. In the neighbourhood of Dartmouth are to be seen a few of his landscapes, but those very bad. He was very fond of chemistry, to which he devoted a considerable portion of his time. Most of his colours, which he prepared himself, went through that operation: and he is said to have discovered the art of fixing those which are the most fading. Of music he was passionately fond, and though he was not an excellent performer on any instrument, he composed some pieces which display genius. He also invented and constructed an instrument, containing sixty strings struck with a bow, moved by the foot, and modulated by keys. Some of his poetical pieces have been printed, but most of his papers were destroyed. Only one print has been taken from his works; to wit, a mezzotinto scraped by Fisher: it is from a portrait of the eminent Dr. John Huxham, M.D., of Plymouth, and the only portrait ever done of that physician.

* Mem. page 12.

his judicious friend. However, before that could take place, Mr. Cranch's death prevented this act of gratitude; but I have often seen the cup at Sir Joshua's table.

That the state of the arts, at Sir Joshua's first arrival in London, was deplorable, is allowed, though one or two exceptions were beginning to appear; and Hogarth seems to have been of opinion, that Hudson* was not the only painter of his time that was indebted to Vanhaaken for assistance in finishing portraits; for on the death of this eminent drapery painter, he produced a ludicrous caricature of Vanhaaken's funeral procession, containing a long train, composed of all the portrait painters of the metropolis, as mourners, and overwhelmed with the deepest distress. The genius of Hogarth was too great, and his public employment too little, to require the assistance of a drapery painter, therefore he might safely point his satire at those who did.

Early anecdotes of Sir Joshua, at that period, cannot be very numerous, or very interesting; but in recording that respecting Pope,† I have done it as an instance to shew the high respect that was paid to the poet whilst living, and also with what reverence young Reynolds beheld genius, whether poetic or graphical.

Sir Joshua, during his residence at Plymouth Dock,‡ though he met, even there, with considerable employment, seems not to have invariably exhibited striking symptoms of his future excellence; indeed, a few of his early productions arebut indifferent, being carelessly drawn, and frequently in common place attitudes, like those of his old master Hudson, with

---

* Mem. page 12. † Mem. page 14. ‡ Mem. page 16.

one hand hid in the waistcoat, and the hat under the arm ; a very favourite attitude with portrait painters, at that time, because particularly convenient to the artist, as by it he got rid of the tremendous difficulty of painting the hand. But one gentleman, whose portrait Reynolds painted, desired to have his hat on his head, in the picture, which was quickly finished, in a common place attitude, done without much study, and sent home ; where, on inspection, it was soon discovered, that although this gentleman, in his portrait, had one hat upon his head, yet there was another under his arm. This picture I never saw ; but I have heard the anecdote so often repeated, and from such authority, that I apprehend it to be a truth.

It was at this period that he painted a portrait of Miss Chudleigh, afterwards Duchess of Kingston, who was then on a visit to Saltram, near Plymouth, the seat of J. Parker, esq. where he executed the picture ; and I have heard him say, that Miss Chudleigh, at that period, was eminently beautiful, and possessed the most delicate person he had ever seen, though afterwards she grew extremely large and coarse.

Of other events, previous to his arrival at Rome, I have nothing to add ; but, as a proof of his diligence whilst at that capital of the arts,* I cannot omit giving a few of his observations, which I have seen in his hand-writing, apparently made on the spot, as remarks to refresh his memory, and promote improvement in his future practice ; they may therefore be interesting to young artists.

" He says—" The Leda, in the Colonna Palace, by Corre-

* Mem. page 25.

gio, is dead coloured white, and black or ultramarine in the shadows; and over that is scumbled, thinly and smooth, a warmer tint, I believe caput mortuum. The lights are mellow, the shadows bluish, but mellow. The picture is painted on a pannel, in a broad and large manner, but finished like an enamel; the shadows harmonize and are lost in the ground.

"The Ecce Homo of Corregio, in the same palace. The shadows are entirely lost in the ground; perhaps more so by time than they were at first.

"The Adonis of Titian, in the Colonna palace, is dead coloured white, with the muscles marked bold: the second painting, he scumbled a light colour over it: the lights a mellow flesh colour; the shadows in the light parts of a faint purple hue; at least they were so at first. That purple hue seems to be occasioned by blackish shadows under, and the colour scumbled over them.

"I copied the Titian, in the Colonna collection, with white, umber, minio, cinnabar, black; the shadows thin of colour.

"In respect to painting the flesh tint, after it has been finished with very strong colours, such as ultramarine and carmine, pass white over it, very, very thin with oil. I believe it will have a wonderful effect.

"Or paint the carnation too red, and then scumble it over with white and black.

"Then," he adds, "dead colour with white and black only; at the second sitting, carnation. (To wit, the Barocci in the palace Albani, and Corregio in the Pamphili.)

"Poussin's landscapes, in the Verospi palace, are painted

on a dark ground made of Indian red and black. The same ground might do for all other subjects as well as landscapes.

" Make a finished sketch of every portrait you intend to paint, and, by the help of that, dispose your living model: then finish at the first time on a ground made of Indian red and black."

It may be seen by those various schemes, to which Reynolds had recourse, how eager he was in the pursuit of excellence, and they may serve as a good example to beginners: again he remarks, that " all the shadows in the works of the Caracci, Guercino, as well as the Venetian school, are made with little colour, but much oil; the Venetians' seem to be made only of a drying oil, composed of red lead and oil.

" In comparison with Titian and Paul Veronese, all the other Venetian masters appear hard; they have, in a degree, the manner of Rembrandt; all mezzotinto, occasioned by scumbling over their pictures with some dark oil or colour.*

" After a strict examination of the best pictures, the benefit to be derived from them, is to draw such conclusions as may serve in future as fixed rules of practice; taking care not to be amused with trifles, but to learn to regard the excellencies chiefly.

" There are some who are very diligent in examining pictures, and yet are not at all advanced in their judgment; although they can remember the exact colour of every figure, &c.

---

* Titian, Paul Veronese, Tintoretto, Rubens, and Vandyke have painted drapery admirably; and indeed the Lombard school have excelled in that and colouring, as the Romans have in design and nudity.

in the picture: but not reflecting deeply on what they have seen, or making observations to themselves, they are not at all improved by the crowd of particulars that swim on the surface of their brains; as nothing enters deep enough into their minds to do them benefit through digestion.

"A painter should form his rules from pictures, rather than from books or precepts; this is having information at the first hand—at the fountain head. Rules were first made from pictures, not pictures from rules. The first compilers of rules for Painting were in the situation in which it is most desirable a student should be. Thus, every picture an artist sees, whether the most excellent or most ordinary, he should consider from whence that fine effect, or that ill effect, proceeds; and then there is no picture, ever so indifferent, but he may look at to his profit.

"The manner of the English Travellers in general, and of those who most pique themselves on studying Vertu, is, that instead of examining the beauties of those works of fame, and why they are esteemed, they only enquire the subject of the picture, and the name of the painter, the history of a statue, and where it was found, and write that down. Some Englishmen, while I was in the Vatican, came there, and spent above six hours in writing down whatever the antiquary dictated to them; they scarcely ever looked at the paintings the whole time."

He also made the following remarks on the character given of Apelles:—

"It is a matter of dispute among painters, whether Apelles would be esteemed as a great painter were he now alive; the very argument I have heard urged against it is what persuades

me he was a good painter; to wit, that he made use of but four colours.* A remark made by Pliny is, that he polished away, or varnished over his pictures, to take off their glaring effect, and to deaden the tints; but Pliny does not speak on this point like a painter: he observed, that the pictures of Apelles had not that raw and gaudy colouring like those of his cotemporaries, and therefore imagined it was occasioned by a varnish; but it was from his judicious breaking those colours to the standard of nature.

"The ancient painters, I am fully persuaded, by many circumstances in the accounts given of them, painted in the great and true style: of this, the following anecdote, mentioned by Pliny, is a considerable confirmation.

"A painter had executed a picture which he valued for what is alone truly valuable in painting, that is, character and expression. On its being exposed in public, he was mortified, to find, amongst other commendations, bestowed upon this picture, a partridge admired that he had painted in a corner of the picture, that it was so natural it looked to be alive—he defaced it entirely.

"The Italians, at present, in their historical pictures, do not attempt to paint the drapery to appear natural; I believe for no other reason than because their masters before them did not; for if they were guided by the same principle that influenced their great predecessors, they would likewise avoid the glaring colouring that at present they adopt, and attend more to a grand simplicity in all the other branches of the art.

* It was always Sir Joshua's advice to his scholars, to use as few colours as possible, as the only means of being most secure from becoming heavy or dirty in colouring.

"When a true judge of art is wrapt in admiration on the intellectual excellencies of a picture, it is with pain that he hears a tame remark on the colouring, handling, &c. When, like St. Paul, he is, by enthusiasm, lifted up (if I may so say) to the third heaven, he is too high to observe the inferior parts—he gazes only on the whole together.

"Suppose a person, while he is contemplating a capital picture by Raffaelle, or the Carracci, whilst he is wrapt in wonder at the sight of St. Paul preaching at Athens, and the various dispositions of his audience, or is struck with the distress of the mother, in the Death of the Innocents, or with tears in his eyes beholds the dead Christ of Caracci, would it not offend him to have his attention called off to observe a piece of drapery in the picture naturally represented?

"Raffaelle had the true spirit and fire of his art; all his figures seem to be really and unaffectedly intently occupied according to their intended destinations. This is the proper spirit of Raffaelle; instead of which we find, in most other painters, ridiculous contortions of body, actions that we never saw in nature, that, as Shakespeare humourously expresses it, 'One would think that some of nature's journeymen had made them, they imitate humanity so abominably.'

"We find Raffaelle, in his works, sometimes possessed, as it were, with the very soul and spirit of Michael Angelo, and perceive that it is from him he received his inspiration; witness his God the Father dividing Light from Darkness, and Elias lifted up to Heaven. Raffaelle despised himself when he saw the Capella Sistina of Michael Angelo, and resolved to alter his own style entirely; and there is as great a difference between the Heliodorus and his other

paintings in the Vatican, as there is between the Greek and the Roman sculpture.

" Sometimes a painter, by seeking for attitudes too much, becomes cold and insipid. This is generally the case with those who would have every figure a fine action; they lose sight of nature, and become uninteresting and cold.

" Another general fault is that which the French are commonly guilty of, seeking after what they call *spirit and fire*, and thus outstrip the modesty of nature, when their subject requires no such fire, or perhaps quite the contrary; however, they learnt it of him whom they esteem as perfection itself—that was their master!"

I cannot agree altogether with Reynolds in loading the fame of Raffaelle with so enormous a debt to Michael Angelo. Raffaelle improved himself very much by seeing the works of Leonardo da Vinci and Fra. Bartolomeo: but the true attributes of Raffaelle, and by which he gains his highest fame, are wholly his own; and had he possessed nothing more than what he gained from either Leonardo da Vinci, Fra. Bartolomeo, or Michael Angelo, we should not at this time have held his great name in reverence.

After Reynolds had discovered the excellencies of Raffaelle, he very judiciously made several studies rather than copies from the most striking heads in the Vatican, such as more particularly contained powerful hints to assist him in his future practice, even in portrait, in respect to simplicity, dignity, character, expression, and drawing.

Several of those heads are now in my possession.

The treasures of art * in the city of Rome, although so cap-

* Mem. page 29.

tivating to Reynolds, he at length thought it but prudent to quit, in order to have the more time to inspect the various other schools of Italy, particularly those of Bologna and Genoa, before he took his final farewell of that delightful country; I must not omit, in this place, therefore, to insert the memoranda from his journal of what he saw at the latter city. He says—

"In the Palazzo Durazzo, I saw a most admirable portrait of a man by Rembrandt, his hands one in the other; a prodigious force of colouring.

"But the picture which should be first mentioned is very large, and the most capital one I have seen by Paul Veronese, of Mary Magdalen washing the feet of Christ, containing about ten figures as large as life, admirably finished.

"Three large pictures by Luca Jordano, the best likewise of that master; figures the size of life; to wit—

"Seneca going into the bath;

"A subject from Tasso's Jerusalem; a man and woman going to be burned at a stake;

"A Perseus shewing Medusa's head; many figures, some of which appear to be turned to stone.

"In the gallery are a great number of statues; I think the one considered the best is that of Mercury.

"A picture of St. Stephen stoned; said to be by Raffaelle.

"Palazzo of the Prince Doria. A magnificent fountain in the middle of the garden, representing Neptune drawn by sea-horses.

"This palace is uninhabited, so that scarcely any thing remains worth seeing, but such works of art as they could not

remove; which are ceilings, and some of the walls painted by Perino del Vaga.

"Palazzo Brignoli. A crucifix of white marble in a niche; a real light, within the niche, comes from above, which has a fine effect.

"In the Palazzo Balbi, in Strada Balbi, are many good pictures."

From a variety of observations on other places, I shall here give one respecting the cupola of the cathedral of Parma, of which he says—

"Relieve the light part of the picture with a dark ground, or the dark part with a light ground, whichever will have the most agreeable effect, or make the best mass. The cupola of Parma has the dark objects relieved, and the lights scarcely distinguishable from the ground. Some whole figures are considered as shadows; all the lights are of one colour. It is in the shadows only that the colours vary. In general, all the shadows should be of one colour, and the lights only to be distinguished by different tints; at least it should be so when the back ground is dark in the picture."

At Florence, Reynolds spent only two months; and at Venice he made a still shorter stay—I think not more than six weeks—yet it is that school which seems most powerfully to have influenced the professional conduct of his life.

Soon after the return of Reynolds to his native land,* the boldness of his youthful attempts, and the novelty of his style, totally confounded all the old painters of that time, who had not

* Mem. page 32.

J. Reynolds Pinx.t

Jos. Tellyer Sculp.

The Right Hon.ble John Earl Ligonier.

yet given up the adoration to their idol, the late Sir Godfrey Kneller; and as no genius in art had appeared in England from the period of Kneller's death, they were not prepared to worship any other, or even to countenance any one guilty of the heresy of differing in practice from him whom they held to be absolute perfection in his line. The following anecdote will serve to corroborate the foregoing remark, and some others on the same subject in the body of the "Memoirs."—Ellis, an eminent painter of that time, was one of the few remaining artists of the school of Kneller, when Reynolds began to be known and to introduce a style entirely new. Having heard of the well-known picture of the Turkish boy,* he called on Reynolds in order to see it; and perceiving his mode of painting to be very unlike the manner to which he himself had always been accustomed, and indeed unlike any thing he had ever seen before, he was as much astonished as Hudson is said to have been, and, like him, exclaimed, "Ah! Reynolds, this will never answer! why, you don't paint in the least degree in the manner of Kneller:" but when Reynolds began to expostulate, and to vindicate himself, Ellis, feeling himself unable to give any good reason for the objection he had advanced, cried out in a great rage, "Shakespeare in poetry, and Kneller in painting, damme!" and immediately ran out of the room.

The prepossession of the English nation in favour of Kneller and Lely, which Reynolds had to combat in the commence-

* Guiseppe Philippo Liberali Merche, mentioned in page 33 of the Memoir, from whom Reynolds painted the Turkish Boy, died in London on the 2d of April, 1808, at the age of 73.

ment of his career, raised an over-violent prejudice in his breast against those painters, and it continued to the end of his life; in one place he thus describes the artists of his early days.

"Most of our portrait painters fall into one general fault. They have got a set of postures, which they apply to all persons indiscriminately; the consequence of which is, that all their pictures look like so many sign-post paintings; and if they have a history or a family-piece to paint, the first thing they do is to look over their common-place book, containing sketches which they have stolen from various pictures; then they search their prints over, and pilfer one figure from one print, and another from a second, but never take the trouble of thinking for themselves: on the contrary, the painter, who has a genius, first makes himself master of the subject he is to represent, by reading, or otherwise; then works his imagination up to a kind of enthusiasm, till he in a degree perceives the whole event, as it were, before his eyes, when, as quick as lightning, he gives his rough sketch on paper or canvas. By this means his work has the air of genius stamped upon it, whilst the contrary mode of practice will infallibly be productive of tameness, and of such pictures as will have the semblance of copies. After the painter has made his sketch from his idea only, he may be allowed to look at the works of his predecessors for dresses, ornaments, &c., of the times he intends to represent.

"Every man is a painter for himself; whenever he hears or reads any remarkable event, he forms to himself the looks, actions, and even the ground on which it was transacted. The painter has nothing to do, but to copy those images on canvas which he has in his mind's eye."

"Suidas says that Phidias and Zeuxis were both of them transported by the same enthusiasm that gave life to all their works."*

In some other observations on the French painters of that day, Reynolds said—"The French cannot boast of above one painter of a truly just and correct taste, free of any mixture of affectation or bombast, and he was always proud to own from what models he had formed his style; to wit, Raffaelle and the antique: but all the others of that nation seem to have taken their ideas of grandeur from Romances, instead of the Roman or Grecian histories. Thus their heroes are decked out so nice and so fine, that they look like knights errant just entering the lists at a tournament in gilt armour, and loaded

---

* The following anecdote has been communicated to me by a friend, respecting a modern sculptor, of whom some notice has already been taken.

"Roubiliac, being on a visit in Wiltshire, happened to take a walk in a church-yard on a Sunday morning, near Bowood, just as the congregation was coming out of church; and meeting with old Lord Shelburne, though perfect strangers to each other, they entered into conversation, which ended in an invitation to dinner. When the company were all assembled at table, Roubiliac discovered a fine antique bust of one of the Roman Empresses, which stood over a side-table, when immediately running up to it with a degree of enthusiasm, he exclaimed, "What an air! what a pretty mouth! what *tout ensemble!*" The company began to stare at one another for some time, and Roubiliac regained his seat; but instead of eating his dinner, or shewing attention to any thing about him, he every now and then burst out into fits of admiration in praise of the bust. The guests by this time, concluding he was mad, began to retire one by one, till Lord Shelburne was almost left alone. This determined his Lordship to be a little more particular; and he now, for the first time, asked him his name. "My name!" says the other, "What, do you not know me then? My name is Roubiliac."—"I beg your pardon, Sir," said his Lordship; I now feel that I should have known you." Then calling on the company, who had retired to the next room, he said, "Ladies and gentlemen, you may come in; this is no absolute madman. This is M. Roubiliac, the greatest statuary of his day, and only occasionally mad in the admiration of his art."

most unmercifully with silk, satin, velvet, gold, jewels, &c. and hold up their heads, and carry themselves with an air like a petit-maitre with his dancing-master at his elbow: thus corrupting the true taste, and leading it astray from the pure, the simple, and grand style, by a mock majesty and false magnificence. Even the rude uncultivated manner of Caravaggio is still a better extreme than those affected turns of the head, fluttering draperies, contrasts of attitude, and distortions of passion."

From the second portrait which Reynolds painted in the metropolis,* that of William, second Duke of Devonshire, a print was taken in mezzotinto, and it is said to be the first print ever taken from any of his works. This could not fail to have some effect upon public opinion; but it will, no doubt, be interesting to have a sketch of his own feelings at the time from some manuscript memorandums, written carelessly, and apparently in haste, and in which I find the following observations, evidently referring to the fashionable painting of Liotard,† and affording us some idea of the false taste prevalent in England at that period. He says—

"It requires an uncommon share of boldness and perseverance to stand against the rushing tide of Gothicism. A painter that would please, and has no greater views than making his fortune, I should advise, instead of studying the solemnity of Raffaelle, Poussin, or the Caraccis, to turn his eyes on the beautiful and pleasing manner of painting that is practised by the ingenious fan painters. There he will find what is so often called out for—"Give me daylight;"—in those works he will find daylight enough; and if he studies the bright and beautiful colours there made use of, he will

* Mem. page 34. † Mem. page 35.

merit the deserved and wished-for character of a pleasing painter. But to be serious; I do not know so despicable a character in the art, as what is understood in general as a pleasing painter; nor any thing that gives me a greater prejudice against a work, than when I am told I shall see a pleasing picture; such works are commonly faint, spiritless, gaudy things; how unlike the divine and noble vigour of Raffaelle!

"It is but a cold commendation to say of a painter—he pleases, and does no more. He ravishes; he transports with admiration; he seeks to take possession rather of your soul than of your eyes!—such is the character of a truly great painter.

"It is a melancholy reflection to a painter, who has ambition, to think that a picture painted in the style and manner of the greatest masters, should not please the nation where he is obliged to live.

"Those who are novices in connoissance judge of a picture only by the name of the painter; others, more advanced in knowledge of art, have a desire to think differently from the rest of the world in respect to the most famous pictures; and, again, from that partiality which men have to their own discoveries, will find out merits in pictures universally condemned."

A real painter should be above any regard to pleasing the vulgar, whose judgment is governed solely by accident or caprice, and who are better pleased with a tawdry and false taste than with the pure, simple, and grand gusto of Raffaelle, which is too deep to be reached by their superficial imagination; but artists should not be content with admiring the

effect; let them carefully examine into the causes, and in so doing, they will find more art, and knowledge of nature, than they are at first aware of.

In addition to his several bold, because early, advances to a judicious and original style in portrait painting,* I may also record one which I have seen; a portrait painted at this time of a Captain Orme, aid-du-camp to General Braddock. This picture attracted much notice by its boldness, and singularity of the attempt. It is a full length, wherein a horse is represented at the side of the officer; an effort in composition, so new to his barren competitors in art, as must have struck them with dismay, for they dared not venture on such perilous flights of invention. It must be observed that it is a very sombre picture, yet it possesses great merit.

In his own memoranda, written at this period,† a circumstance is given, which proves the quickness of his perception, and the use he made of it. He there describes the effect which a certain picture, by an old master, had upon one of his sitters; but as he does not specify the particular picture, we can only judge of its excellence from the trait recorded. It was a work, however, which he himself greatly admired, and at that time was hung up as one of the ornaments of his painting-room.

"To support," he says, "my own opinion of the excellence of this picture by a high authority, I cannot forbear the temptation of mentioning, that Lord ——, whilst I had the honour of drawing his portrait, could not keep from turning his eyes from me, and fixing them on this picture in

* Mem. page 37. † Mem. page 39.

raptures, with such an expression in his countenance as may be imagined from a man of his tender feelings. I snatched the moment, and drew him, as he then appeared to me, in profile, with as much of that expression of a pleasing melancholy as my capacity enabled me to hit off; when the picture was finished, he liked it, and particularly for that expression, though I believe without reflecting on the occasion of it!"

In regard to Reynolds's first acquaintance with Johnson, I have little to add; yet, with respect to the book which first engaged his attention towards the latter,* it is worthy of remark how conspicuous the extraordinary credulity of Johnson appears in his life of Savage. It is wonderful, indeed, that he did not convince himself whilst he was writing it, as there needs no other witness than his own narrative, to prove that he attempts to vindicate an imposture!

Of Johnson's pride,† I have heard Sir Joshua himself observe, that if any man drew him into a state of obligation without his own consent, that man was the first he would affront, by way of clearing off the account. There is, in some men's minds, a repugnance to, nay an abhorrence of, a dependant state of obligation, or of resting on another's patronage. This at its birth proceeds from dignity of soul, and proves the consciousness of inward strength. A virtuous reverence of ourselves is the foundation of respect from others; yet care should be taken that it does not swell into deformity, or lose its native comeliness and virtuous principle from being nursed and tutored by pride.

With respect to a state of obligation, one great inconve-

---

* Mem. page 39. † Mem. page 41.

nience certainly may attend it, which is, that at some time it is possible that the patron may give a real and sufficient cause to his humble dependant to be offended. The meek sufferer is then in a dilemma. If he patiently swallows the bitter potion from a sense of duty for former favours, he will be considered as a slave, and as mean in spirit; and, on the other hand, to resent it like a man, will, to many, appear much like ingratitude. Yet, again, to determine, like Johnson, to go through life, and to resist all patronage whatsoever, may indicate a proud and unsocial spirit!

Of all charities, that of *employing* the poor is the most charitable, and best patronage. It is in a manner to double the obligation by lessening it; it being more grateful to any man to put him in a capacity of relieving himself, than to make him a pensioner to others. It is turning a bounty into a reward, and promoting industry.

For industry is the heir apparent to bounty; poverty but the presumptive heir.

I have already noticed, that in the year 1755,* Reynolds was still advancing in fame, and in his memoranda of the 6th of December of that year, I find the following record of the colours he then made use of, and of the preparation of his pallet—

"For painting the flesh; black, blue black, white, lake, carmine, orpiment, yellow ochre, ultramarine, and varnish.

"To lay the pallet; first lay carmine and white in different degrees; second, lay orpiment and white, ditto; third, lay blue black, and white, ditto.

---

* Mem. page 48.

"The first sitting, for expedition, make a mixture on the pallet as near the sitter's complexion as you can."

He adds also this observation on colouring:—

"To preserve the colours fresh and clean in painting, it must be done by laying on more colours, and not by rubbing them in when they are once laid; and, if it can be done, they should be laid just in their proper places at first, and not any more be touched: because the freshness of the colours is tarnished and lost by mixing and jumbling them together; for there are certain colours which destroy each other by the motion of the pencil when mixed to excess."

It was about the period of 1758, when his price was only twenty guineas a head,* that Reynolds found his profession the most lucrative; as I have heard himself confess that at that time he received six sitters in the day, and found it necessary to keep a list of the names of those who waited, until vacancies occurred, in order to have their portraits painted by him. He then received them in the order in which they were set down in the list; and many of those portraits were sent home, even before the colours were dry.

He also kept a port-folio in his painting-room, containing every print that had then been taken from his portraits; so that those who came to sit, had this collection to look over, and if they fixed on any particular attitude, in preference, he would repeat it precisely in point of drapery and position, as this much facilitated the business, and was sure to please the sitter's fancy.†

---

* Mem. page 49.

† In an account of the rise of the arts, or the encouragement given to them in

He now engaged several drapery painters to assist him; indeed, I have heard him observe that no man ever acquired a fortune by the work of his own hands alone.

---

this country, at the time when Reynolds was fast advancing towards the attainment of fame, it may not be unsuitable to mention, what all preceding biographers have passed over, the liberality of the Duke of Richmond. The following is the copy of an advertisement which was published in the weekly papers during the years 1758 and 1759:—

" For the use of those who study
Painting, Sculpture, and Engraving, will be opened,
On Monday, the 6th of March next,
At his Grace the Duke of Richmond's,
In Whitehall,

" A room containing a large collection of original plaister casts from the best antique statues and busts which are now at Rome and Florence.

" It is imagined that the study of these most exact copies from antiques may greatly contribute towards giving young beginners of genius an early taste and idea of beauty and proportion, which, when thoroughly acquired, will, in time, appear in their several performances.

" The public is therefore advertised, that any known painter, sculptor, carver, or other settled artist, to whom the study of these *gessos* may be of use, shall have liberty to draw or model from any of them, at any time; and upon application to the person that has the care of them, any particular figure shall be placed in such light as the artist shall desire.

" And, likewise, any young man or boy, above the age of twelve years, may also have the same liberty, by a recommendation from any known artist to Mr. Wilton, sculptor, in Hedge Lane.

" For these young persons, a fresh statue or bust will be set once a week or fortnight in a proper light for them to draw from.

" They will only be admitted from the hour of nine to eleven in the morning, and from the hour of two to four in the afternoon.

" On Saturday, Messrs. Wilton and Cipriani will attend to see what progress each has made, to correct their drawings and models, and give them such instructions as shall be thought necessary.

In addition to what I have already said respecting Reynolds's contributions to the Idler,* I may here add, that at that time he had also committed to paper a variety of remarks on the occasion, which afterwards served him as hints for his discourses; and from those unfinished memoranda I now insert a few of his first thoughts, evidently drawn up as matter of caution for himself:—

"Avoid that insipidity which is very commonly the result, when you take your ideas from any preceding master. Salvator Rosa saw the necessity of trying some new source of pleasing the public in his works. The world were tired with Claude Lorraine's and Gasper Poussin's long train of imitators.

"Salvator, therefore, struck into a wild, savage kind of nature, which was new and striking. Sannazarius, the Italian poet, for the same reason, substituted fishermen for shepherds, and changed the scene to the sea.

"Nobody is to touch any of the *gessos* upon any account, or to move them out of their places, or draw upon either them, their pedestals, or the walls of the room; any person offending in such manner will be dismissed, and never admitted again upon any consideration.

"There will be given, at Christmas and Midsummer, annually, to those who distinguish themselves by making the greatest progress, the following premiums;

"A figure will be selected from the rest, and a large silver medal will be given for the best design of it, and another for the best model in basso relievo.

"A smaller silver medal for the second best design, and one for the second best basso relievo.

"The servant who takes care of the room has strict orders not to receive any money. It is therefore hoped and expected that none will be offered."

London Chronicle, Feb. 25, 1758.

* Mem. page 52.

" The want of simplicity in the air of the head, the action of the figure, and colour of the drapery, is destructive of dignity. If a painter has a true taste for simplicity, it will be discovered in every part of his work, even his colouring; there is a pure, chaste modesty, as it may be called, in opposition to a bold, impudent, glaring colour, such as you see in ordinary painters' works.

" Indeed, the want of simplicity is the prevailing error in most painters respecting their works. They are apt to think they can never enrich their pictures too much: their colours are gaudy in the extreme: but what I particularly object against is the violent love that almost all of them have for contrast: and I dare say there is scarcely a painter but thinks he can never contrast his figures too much.

" The French writers on painting, which are the best we have, are fond of talking of contrast:—" If one figure," says Du Piles, " is with the face towards you, let the next to it shew his back." Those rules can only proceed from a narrow-minded mechanical artist; and not from one who has studied nature, the antique, Raffaelle, or the Carraccis. I do not mean to say that such contrast will always have a mean effect; but to establish it as an inviolable rule is absurd, and tends to destroy the greatest beauty of a painting, which should represent pure, unaffected nature. By means of those studied contrasts, no figure so placed can appear eager and intent on what he is about. It gives also a hurry and confusion to the composition of the picture; and of consequence, the same hurry of imagination to the spectator, and deprives the work of its most noble quality, which is the majesty of repose.

" When I think of this high principle of the art, it always

brings to my mind the finest pictures at Bologna by Lud. Carracci, and the Transfiguration by Raffaelle. In this last, every figure is animated, ardent, and intent on what he is engaged in, but still with dignity ; then there is also a certain solemnity pervading the whole picture which must strike every one with awe and reverence, that is capable of being touched by any excellence in works of art.

" When I have stood looking at that picture from figure to figure, the eagerness, the spirit, the close unaffected attention of each figure to the principal action, my thoughts have carried me away that I have forgot myself ; and for that time might be looked upon as an enthusiastic madman : for I could really fancy the whole action was passing before my eyes. How superior is this power of leading captive the imagination, to that of producing natural drapery, although so natural, that, as the phrase is, it looks as if you could take it up ! A picture having this effect on the spectator, he need not ask his cicerone whether it is a good picture or not, nor endeavour to criticise it by the help of any rules he may have learned from books.

" But whilst others only admire the work, it is the artist's business to examine from whence this effect proceeds. I will take the liberty of giving a hint ; others may carry it further. The solemnity that the picture first strikes you with, proceeds from its not having too much light, for the same reason that the light of the evening is more solemn than the gay sun at noon day ; consequently, he, who would attempt the heroic style in painting, should never set his figures in bright sunshine ;* and it is for this reason I have often said, that

* Vide King John tampering with Hubert, from Shakespeare.

Rubens's colouring, although a much more esteemed colourist than Raffaelle, would degrade and ruin Raffaelle's pictures.

" Another excellence in the picture of the Transfiguration is the noble kind of harmony of the colouring; a quality, perhaps, this picture has never been remarked for before. It is one of the vulgar errors to imagine, that a picture can never have too much harmony; hence painters, by breaking their colours too much, reduce their picture to be an imitation of a painting on a lady's fan, and entirely destroy its effect when seen at any distance, those broken colours being too weak to preserve their proper degree of force. For instance, the works of Luca Jordano, by an over fondness for this sort of harmony, when they are placed at a distance from the spectator, look altogether like the colour of milk and water. A very close comparison may be made between the harmony of music and that of painting. Music of the soft, gentle, and delicate kind, intended to be heard best when near, requires the notes to be soft, and fall gently into each other, without any harshness in their extremes; whilst, on the contrary, the more masculine and noble style of music, such as marches, &c. should be bold and loud.

" The same rule applies to poetry. The smooth numbers of Pope are not so grand as the masculine style of Milton and Shakespeare.

" Rembrandt was harmonious rather too much; he wanted opposition. Luca Jordano was often the same, but wanted that fine taste of colouring.

" Berghem was too red.

" There cannot be found a better instance of breadth and distinctness of light and shadow, than in a figure by Fiamingo,

in the church of St. Peter's at Rome, a full length statue of St. Bartholomew, four times the size of life. The other statues, which are near it, appear all of a mass, and make neither light nor shadow.

" It is absolutely necessary that a painter, as the first requisite, should endeavour as much as possible to form to himself an idea of perfection, not only of beauty, but of what is perfection in a picture. This conception he should always have fixed in his view, and unless he has this view we shall never see any approaches towards perfection in his works, for it will not come by chance.

" If a man has nothing of that which is called genius, that is, if he is not carried away (if I may so say) by the animation, the fire of enthusiasm, all the rules in the world will never make him a painter.

" He who possesses genius, is enabled to see a real value in those things which others disregard and overlook. He perceives a difference in cases where inferior capacities see none, as the fine ear for music can distinguish an evident variation in sounds which to another ear more dull seem to be the same. This example will also apply to the eye in respect to colouring.

" One who has a genius will comprehend in his idea the whole of his work at once; whilst he who is deficient in genius amuses himself with trifling parts of small consideration, attends with scrupulous exactness to the minuter matters only, which he finishes to a nicety, whilst the whole together has a very ill effect.

" A painter should have a solid foundation in the principles of his art; so as to be able to vindicate his works whenever

they may be unjustly censured ; and not of such an unstable judgment as to estimate the merit of his pieces by the money they bring him.

" The most general rule in the choice of subjects fit for the purpose of the art is that of Horace :—

> " Omne tulit punctum, qui miscuit utile dulci,
> Lectorem delectando pariterque monendo."

Such were his desultory thoughts to which he could recur to refresh his memory as occasion might require.

With respect to the permanent residence which he fitted up in Leicester Fields,* it may perhaps be gratifying to young beginners in the art to be informed of some minute particulars concerning the apparatus of a painter, who was so successful and became so illustrious in his profession.

His painting room was of an octagonal form, about twenty feet long, and about sixteen in breadth. The window which gave the light to this room was square, and not much larger than one half the size of a common window in a private house, whilst the lower part of this window was nine feet four inches from the floor. The chair for his sitters was raised eighteen inches from the floor, and turned round on castors. His pallets were those which are held by a handle, not those held on the thumb. The sticks of his pencils were long, measuring about nineteen inches. He painted in that part of the room nearest to the window ; and never sat down when he worked.

The carriage which he set up, on removing to that house, was particularly splendid, the wheels were partly carved and

---

* Mem. page 53.

S. W. Reynolds Sculpt.

gilt; and on the pannels were painted the four seasons of the year, very well executed by Charles Catton, R. A., the most eminent coach painter of his day.

The coachman frequently got money by admitting the curious to a sight of it; and when Miss Reynolds complained that it was too shewy, Sir Joshua replied, "What! would you have one like an apothecary's carriage?"

I have recorded an anecdote of a complimentary style from the pen of Sterne,* and I may also notice another, when speaking of an awkward attitude into which father Shandy had put himself in order to reach his pocket handkerchief with his left hand, whilst he had employed his right hand in holding his wig, and which awkwardness might have been totally avoided by only taking off his wig with his left hand, and leaving his right hand at liberty for his handkerchief—"Then, his whole attitude had been easy—natural—unforced: Reynolds himself, great and graceful as he paints, might have painted him as he sat." The quotation, it is true, is not very important; yet still it serves to shew in how much respect Reynolds was held by men of genius.

On the mention of Sterne, the following circumstance comes to my recollection. Mrs. C———, a lady of considerable genius, dining one day at Sir Joshua's table, met Lawrence Sterne there, who, as is generally known, was as licentious in his conversation as in his writings, when this lady attacked him with so much keen wit and spirit on his immorality, that he, being already in an ill state of health, is said to have been mortified to such a degree that his death was considerably hastened in consequence of it.

* Mem. page 57.

I have had repeated occasion to record Reynolds's sentiments concerning painting; and I may add, with respect to the practice of the art, that it was his remark that a picture given by the painter as a present, was seldom considered by the person who received it as of much value; whilst, on the contrary, those paid for are esteemed, as their value is thereby ascertained.

That the number of gratuitous portraits by Sir Joshua has not been very great may therefore be accounted for upon this principle, though he did not hesitate occasionally to employ his pencil for his immediate friends: and sometime about the year 1762, he displayed a playful yet elegant idea in a present which he made to Dr. Mudge, of the portrait of his eldest son, then about sixteen years of age, who was a clerk in the navy office in London, and of course a considerable distance from his father, who resided at Plymouth.

This portrait was painted, unknown to the Doctor, and being intended as an agreeable surprize to him, young Mudge was represented as suddenly discovering himself by drawing aside a curtain, and looking out of the canvas, upon the spectator, as an unexpected visitor. The picture is exquisitely painted, and one of Reynolds's finest productions.

Shortly after this portrait was presented to Dr. Mudge, Reynolds's trip to Plymouth, accompanied by Dr. Johnson, took place: when, during a visit to a neighbouring gentleman, Johnson's singularity of conduct produced considerable alarm in the mind of their host; who, in order to gratify his guests, had placed before them every delicacy which the house afforded.

On this occasion, the Doctor, who seldom shewed much discretion in his feeding, devoured so large a quantity of new

honey and of clouted cream, which is peculiar to Devonshire, besides drinking large potations of new cyder, that the entertainer found himself much embarrassed between his anxious regard for the Doctor's health, and his fear of breaking through the rules of politeness by giving him a hint on the subject.

The strength of Johnson's constitution, however, saved him from any unpleasant consequences which might have been expected; but his companion, Reynolds, was more discreet in his appetite, and was much better gratified by a present, for his professional palate, which their host made him of a large jar of very old nut oil, grown fat by length of time, as it had belonged to an ancestor of the family. This prize Reynolds most eagerly took home with him in the carriage, regarding it as deserving of his own personal attention.

Sir Joshua, as a public character, had, of course, frequent invitations, and was not an unfrequent visitor at public entertainments.

A dinner of singular kind of accommodation was given by Mr. Thrale at his brewery to Sir Joshua, Johnson, Goldsmith, Garrick, Edmund Burke, Barretti, and others, who dined on beef-steaks broiled on the coppers, seated in a newly made brewing vessel, sufficiently capacious to contain the company conveniently.

I have heard him relate an anecdote of a venison feast, at which were assembled many who much enjoyed the repast.

On this occasion, Reynolds addressed his conversation to one of the company who sat next to him, but to his great surprise could not get a single word in answer, until at length his silent neighbour, turning to him, said, "Mr. Reynolds, whenever you are at a venison feast, I advise you not to speak

during dinner time, as in endeavouring to answer your questions, I have just swallowed a fine piece of the fat, entire, without tasting its flavour!"

The epicures of convivial society, or the pedants of the literary, were to him equally subjects of his contemplation, but as in his literary intercourse he often met with men of first rate genius, he naturally was solicitous of their intimacy and friendship. Yet, literary fame was but a secondary object* to himself, which, if he could have acquired it, he must have shared with multitudes innumerable, and that too in a department where a decided superiority is not granted to any one in particular; besides, he was too much absorbed in his professional pursuits, in which he aimed at standing alone in his own country, at least without a rival.

His literary efforts were, therefore, merely an occasional employment, and to him only necessary as a means, in addition to his graphic works, to convey instruction: yet some judges of literature consider the former to be so much beyond what might have been expected from him, that they are very unwilling to allow them to be his own production, as I have already noticed more than once. But if it were possible that those critics could once be made sensible of his great and peculiar merits as a painter, they would surely find themselves obliged to grant him the minor ability of being able to have composed his own discourses.

If it were necessary to add any thing else to prove that he arrogated not to himself any literary eminence from the title given to that club of which he was one of the founders, it

* Mem. page 70.

might be remarked that at that period he had only written his three papers in Johnson's Idler, wherefore all his possible claims to a literary character were very small, and but little known.

So far, indeed, was Sir Joshua, from assuming the character of being a man of literature, or a wit,* that I remember on his reading in a morning paper an account of a dinner given by one of his friends to a party *of wits*, as it was expressed, all of whose names were mentioned, and his own amongst the rest, he exclaimed, "Why have they named me amongst them as a wit? I never was a wit in my life!"

I have not specifically noticed the admirable whole length picture which Sir Joshua painted of the late Mrs. Abington in the character of the Comic Muse, and which is now in the possession of the Dorset family; but I may here observe that Mrs. Abington was not only by far the most eminent performer in comedy of her day, and therefore most proper to be the representative of Thalia, but has perhaps never been surpassed in any time. She was also esteemed at that period as a person of most exquisite taste, and, like a woman of superior abilities, had ever a great ambition to be noticed by men eminent for their genius; therefore on her benefit nights she always endeavoured to collect as many distinguished persons, particularly of this Literary Club, as was in her power, in order to add dignity to her audience, taking care to place them in the most conspicuous situation in the house.

Accordingly, Sir Joshua, Dr. Johnson, Dr. Goldsmith, Edmund Burke, and many others of like eminence, rarely

---

* Mem. page 72.

failed attending her performances on such evenings, in which her favourite character was that of Estifania, in "Rule a Wife and Have a Wife."

She, however, much offended Goldsmith, at last, by refusing to take the part which he had written on purpose for her, in his Comedy of "She stoops to Conquer," which character was, of necessity, performed by another actress, to Goldsmith's great mortification, on the first night's representation.

I have already spoken of the Exhibition of Painting, &c. in the year 1764,* which took place at the great room in Spring Gardens, as it had done in the two preceding years, but now with an addition of many of those exhibitors, who, until this period, had continued annually to exhibit at the original place, the great room belonging to the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce, then situated nearly opposite to Beaufort Buildings in the Strand. But that society finding that the artists who had intended to continue with them began to diminish in numbers, and also that their exhibition interfered with the other concerns of the society, they no longer indulged them with the use of their room, and consequently the exhibitions at that place terminated in that year.

This extended and ample exhibition at Spring Gardens had, however, originated from the union of all the artists in the metropolis, as before noticed, in the year 1760, and the success of their exhibitions having given them sufficient encouragement, they now also seriously proposed to incorporate themselves, and accordingly drew up a plan of a charter, at that time, which was granted to them in the following year.

---

* Mem. page 73.

In 1764,* the world and the art lost Hogarth, who died on the 26th of October, at the age of sixty-seven.

At the time, a silly report was propagated by a party, that his death was accelerated by that most severe and cruel poetical epistle, addressed to him by the well known Charles Churchill in consequence of a quarrel that took place from a difference of opinion in politics. In that satire, the poet supposes Hogarth to be in his dotage, and with affected pity laments his fallen state and loss of powers, and concludes with a compliment to Reynolds, saying,

> "The greatest genius to this fate may bow,
> Reynolds, in time, may be like Hogarth now!"

I may add, that this illustrious painter had a weakness, from which, indeed, even the great Shakespeare was not exempt, that of a fondness for a pun; one specimen of which I have heard related by Sir Joshua.

A party of painters, of whom Hogarth was one, were looking at a picture painted by Allan Ramsey, but were not able to ascertain who was the artist, being all in doubt, with the exception of Hogarth, who soon set them right, by saying, "Don't you see clearly in the picture the Ram's eye?"

Another of his foibles, it is well known, was the excessive high opinion he held of his own abilities; for when he was engaged in his work of the *Marriage à la mode*, he said to Reynolds, "I shall very soon be able to gratify the world with such a sight as they have never seen equalled!"

Hogarth has never been admitted to rank high as a painter,

---

* Mem. page 80.

but certainly so as a moralist; yet it has, of late, been discovered, that his small pictures possess considerable dexterity of execution: as to his large pieces, they appear to be the efforts of imbecility; he was totally without the practice required for such works.

The best lesson, indeed, the only one, I believe, by which we can learn to paint small pictures in a grand style, is, first, to gain experience by executing well in the full size of nature, or even larger; and as a proof of this assertion, it may be remarked that there are no instances now to be found in the world of any small pictures possessing the true properties of the grand style, except by those painters who have been accustomed to work on a large scale: for it is only in large pictures that the indispensable necessity exists of marking out with precision and distinctness all the parts; such precision as is not to be found nor required in the smaller size, as small pictures never proceed much beyond sketches. This is the true reason why those, who are painters of small pictures only, cannot paint in a large size.

Nothing in art is more distinguishable than the difference between the small pictures by the painter of large works, and the small pictures by those who never did any other kind, or had never practised in works of the full size of nature: and so convinced have I always been of this as a truth, that, from the mortifying reflection that small pictures only are saleable and commodious in this country, I have often thought it adviseable, in respect to worldly advantage, to execute such; but in that case to follow this severe and laborious method; that is, first, to finish the subject in the full size of life, and afterwards copy it in small, by which means may be obtained that style

of breadth and grandeur to be found in the pictures of great masters even when painted in a small size. The original may be then destroyed, if you please, it being an unprofitable article which nobody will purchase.

But with regard to familiar scenes, Dutch drolls, and comic subjects of every kind, they ought, on no account or pretence whatsoever, to assume a size of any magnitude, as by so doing they give up their interesting quality of a refined toy to become a nuisance; even in the rich luxuriance of Rubens in his Bacchanalian scenes, although executed with the highest powers of mechanic art, we cannot but view the subject with some degree of displeasure from the impropriety of the size alone in which they are represented, as such subjects are only fitted for canvas of smaller dimensions.

In the year 1765, I have recorded Barry's testimony in favour of Reynolds's merits; and in another letter of Barry's to Dr. Sleigh, of the same year, which was written soon after his arrival in London, for the first time, from his native kingdom, Ireland, he says,*

"———— To avoid too great a trespass on your patience, I proposed breaking off with taking notice of the great advance of portrait painting since it got into the hands of Mr. Reynolds; but as you have seen his pictures when you were in England, no one is more capable of discerning the greatness and delicacy of his style, the propriety of his characters, his great force of light and shadow, and taste of colouring."

Very soon after the above was written, Barry was enabled

* Mem. page 80.

by the munificence of the Burkes to set out on his tour of France and Italy; and on another occasion still in the same year, he wrote from Paris to Mr. Burke, when, whilst speaking of the paintings at Versailles, he said, "What I have seen since, gives me more and more reason to admire Mr. Reynolds; you know my sentiments of him already, and the more I know and see of the art, the less likely they are to change."

As it may afford some idea of the degree in which the arts were, at this period, held by the public in England, I shall here give the following anecdote.

It was not long after the arrival of Mr. West in this country, from his studies in Italy, that he displayed his powers in historical painting in a most excellent picture; the subject of which was that of Pylades and Orestes, one of his very best works.

As any attempt in history was, at that period, an almost unexampled effort, this picture became a matter of much surprize: his house was soon filled with visitors from all quarters to see it; and those among the highest rank, who were not able to come to his house to satisfy their curiosity, desired his permission to have it sent to them, nor did they fail every time it was returned to him, to accompany it with compliments of the highest commendation on its great merits. But the most wonderful part of the story is, that notwithstanding all this vast bustle and commendation bestowed upon this justly admired picture, by which Mr. West's servant gained upwards of thirty pounds for showing it, yet no one mortal ever asked the price of the work, or so much as offered to give him a commission to paint any other subject. Indeed there was one gentleman so highly delighted with the picture, and spoke

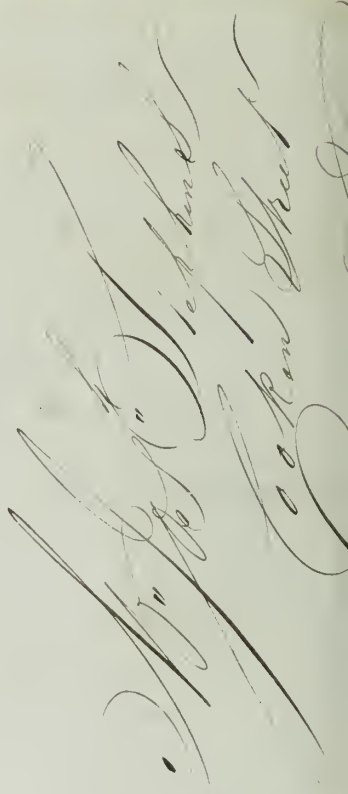
by the munificence of the Burkes to set out on his tour of France and Italy; and on another occasion still in the same year, he wrote from Paris to Mr. Burke, when, whilst speaking of the paintings at

gives me more and
know my sentime
and see of the art,

As it may afford
were, at this perio
here give the follo

It was not long a
from his studies i
historical painting
which was that of
works.

As any attempt
unexampled effort,
prize: his house w
to see it; and thos
able to come to l
his permission to l
time it was returne
of the highest con
most wonderful pa



this vast bustle and commendation bestowed upon this justly admired picture, by which Mr. West's servant gained upwards of thirty pounds for showing it, yet no one mortal ever asked the price of the work, or so much as offered to give him a commission to paint any other subject. Indeed there was one gentleman so highly delighted with the picture, and spoke

of it with such great praise to his father, that he immediately asked him the reason he did not purchase, as he so much admired it, when he answered—"What could I do, if I had it? you would not surely have me hang up a modern English picture in my house, unless it was a portrait?"

In recording a letter of Mr. Burke's, in the year 1766,* part of Sir Joshua's opinion was omitted, after the word "judgment," as Burke added—"I do not at all suppose, that his opinion is, that colouring is an idle or useless part of your art; but, if I apprehend him right, I think his opinion is, that to begin with a wish of excelling in colour, is to begin at the wrong end of the art."

In a subsequent letter,† he observes, "I thank you for Alexander; Reynolds sets a high esteem upon it; he thinks it admirably drawn, and with great spirit. He had it at his house for some time, and returned it in a very fine frame; and it, at present, makes a capital ornament of our little drawing room, between the two doors." Again, speaking of domestic news, he says—

"Here they are (the painters) as you left them; Reynolds every now and then striking out some wonder."

In 1766, Sir Joshua had the honor to paint the portrait of the late unfortunate Queen of Denmark,‡ sister to his present Majesty, immediately before her departure from this country for that kingdom. But the execution of this picture was attended with considerable embarrassment, in respect to making it a pleasant performance; for this unhappy princess, at the

* Mem. page 89. † Mem. page 89. ‡ Mem. page 90.

times of her sitting for the portrait, was generally in tears, as if impressed with a presentiment of her future misfortunes.

I do not know who is the possessor of this picture, or at whose request it was painted; but there is a mezzotinto print taken from it.

There is still, in the Royal Palace of Trianon, near Paris, an historical picture by Sir Joshua, which he painted about the period now under revision, the size rather less than that of a whole length canvas; it represents the subject of Abraham and Isaac. This must have been one of his earliest attempts at historical painting; but how it has got into its present situation in France I do not know, as it is a very rare thing for English paintings to appear beyond the limits of the realm. It is evident, however, from its preservation, that its possessors have been liberal enough to allow *some* merit to British art.

At home, indeed, Sir Joshua's merit and originality were now almost universally acknowledged;* and, as a further confirmation of the truth of Burke's assertion,† recorded in the Memoir, Barry also, in a letter from Rome to Dr. Sleigh in Ireland, dated November, 1767, says—

"As to Roman artists, notwithstanding what may be said to the contrary, I have no scruple at pronouncing them not worth criticising; and I shall, with a heart-felt satisfaction, say, that Reynolds, and our people at home, possess, with a very few exceptions, all that exists of sound art in Europe.

---

* Mem. page 93.

† Amongst those specimens which Burke alluded to, Sir Joshua had painted one particularly fine, a three quarter size of George Colman, sen., which picture

In the course of the year 1768,* Goldsmith's comedy, called the Good-Natured Man, came out at Covent Garden theatre. In this play the bailiff scene was thought to be vulgar by the company in the galleries, who violently testified their disapprobation at dialogue so low; and when the speech in that scene was uttered, containing the words "That's all my eye," their delicacy was so much hurt, that it was apprehended the comedy (which in other respects was approved of) would have been driven from the stage for ever. However, by expunging the objectionable parts, that composition became a stock play, as it is called, to the theatre, and put five hundred pounds into Goldsmith's pocket.

It was in this year that the King of Denmark came to England, when every species of ingenuity was set to work in hopes of affording him amusement: the society of artists among the rest exerted their powers, and produced a splendid exhibition of their works at the great room in Spring Gardens, not only in order to gratify his Danish Majesty, but also to certify to him the degree to which the arts had risen in this country. Mr. Reynolds graced it by four of his best pictures, to wit:—

---

is now in the possession of the Earl of Mulgrave; it was painted in the winter season, and the colours, from the dampness of the atmosphere, would not harden, for which reason Sir Joshua placed the picture very close to the fire, in order to dry it more expeditiously. In the mean time, a sudden gust of wind rushed down the chimney, and unluckily, as was at first considered, sprinkled the picture all over with soot and dust, which it was impossible to brush entirely off, as the colours were still damp as when first laid upon the canvas. This accident has therefore given it a darker hue of colour, but without any diminution of harmony or effect.

* Mem. page 97.

A singularly fine portrait, half length, of the famous Laurence Sterne, of which there is a very good mezzotinto print.

A picture, representing James Paine, architect, and James Paine, jun.: from this picture there is also a good print taken.

A portrait of a young Lady with a Dog.

A portrait of a Lady, full length.

The exhibition was opened to the public on September 30, 1768.

But the most important event recorded in the memoirs of that year was the foundation of the present Royal Academy, the following account is thus related by one of the principal persons concerned in its formation.*

" The four persons who first planned the institution, were Sir William Chambers, Mr. West, Mr. Cotes, and Mr. Moser, these together carried on the project with such profound secresy, that not one of the incorporated society had the least knowledge or idea of its having been seriously thought of; insomuch, that even Mr. Kirby their president, had just at that time assured them, from his chair of office, that his Majesty intended to patronise them, and also to visit their exhibition. In the mean time, the four above-named persons, with the concurrence of some others of their party, proceeded in their plan. They also made out a list of their officers, as well as of those who were to compose the body, containing about thirty names, and had inserted that of Reynolds amongst the rest. This list was to be delivered to the King for his approbation and signature: however, Mr. Reynolds was still unwil-

* Mem. page 108.

ling to join with either party, which resolution he made known to Sir William Chambers; in consequence of which Mr. Penny was sent to persuade him to join their party, but that proved in vain. Penny then applied to Mr. West, and begged him to intercede with Reynolds, adding, that he was the only person that could influence him to consent. Mr. West accordingly called on Mr. Reynolds on the same evening, on which the whole party had a meeting, about thirty in number, at Mr. Wilton's house, expecting the result of Mr. West's negociation, as the King had appointed the following morning to receive their plan, with the nomination of their officers. Mr. West remained upwards of two hours endeavouring to persuade Reynolds, and at last prevailed so far, that he ordered his coach and went with Mr. West to meet the party; and immediately, on his entering the room, they, with one voice, hailed him as their president. He seemed to be very much affected by the compliment, and returned them his thanks for the high mark of their approbation; but declined the honour till such time as he had consulted with his friends Dr. Johnson and Mr. Edmund Burke. This demur greatly disappointed the company, as they were expected to be with the King on the very next morning, by appointment; but Messrs. West and Cotes avoided going to the King next day, as they could not present him with a complete list of their officers, for the want of a president; and it was not till a fortnight after that Reynolds gave his consent, although Mr. West had called on him in the meantime to know his determination, when Reynolds frankly told him, that he had been informed, from the very best authority, that their scheme would come to nothing, as it was wholly a delusion: and when Mr. West testified his

astonishment at such an idea, Mr. Reynolds freely confessed to him, that he had the intelligence from Mr. Kirby himself, who assured him that the King had declared his intention of giving his countenance and protection to the incorporated Society of Artists, and also to visit their annual exhibition, to which Mr. Kirby added, that, in consequence, he had himself declared the same to the society from the president's chair.

"It was just about this time that Mr. West had finished his picture of the subject of Regulus, which was painted by the command of the King, and, on the morning appointed by his Majesty, he went with it to the palace in order to show it to him, when the King was graciously pleased to approve of it highly. And at the time, whilst his Majesty was looking at the picture with Mr. West in the room, they were informed by a page, that Mr. Kirby was without waiting for his Majesty's commands. He was immediately sent for, and, on his entrance, the King directed his (Mr. Kirby's) attention to the picture, asking his opinion of it; Mr. Kirby commended the picture much, and particularly that part which fell under his own province, to wit, the perspective, as in that science Kirby had been the King's instructor. Kirby asked who was the painter of so good a picture, when the King pointed to Mr. West as the artist who had done it. Mr. Kirby then observed, that such a work ought most certainly to be seen by the public at large, and hoped his Majesty would permit it to be in the exhibition of the incorporated Society of Artists. The King answered, that it was his pleasure it should be exhibited, but it most certainly should be at his own Royal Academy exhibition. At these words poor Kirby appeared

Miss Day.

London Printed for JOHN BOWLES at No 13 in Cornhill.

to be like one thunder-struck, and just ready to drop on the floor; it was the first confirmation he had received of the report which before he had considered as unfounded, and did not believe. It has been said, and supposed by many, that this circumstance so much affected his mind, that he actually died soon after of the extreme mortification it gave him.

With respect to the title of knighthood,* which accompanied the election to the president's chair,† I have only to add, that Edmund Burke, like Dr. Johnson, was also much gratified by the honour conferred on Sir Joshua; and he, at the time, remarked that the sound of the name was so well adapted for a title, that it seemed as if it had been chosen for the purpose.

That such a measure as the establishment of an academy did not take place before, was accounted for, in some degree, by Sir Joshua himself;‡ but another reason may also be assigned, to wit, the total neglect of the arts, both by the nation and its governors, and the consequent poverty of the body of artists, which rendered it impossible until his Majesty lent his assistance.

It has been already remarked, that the delivery of Sir Joshua in giving his discourses was not so distinct and audible as might be desired, when the matter was so excellent; and the following circumstance is in some degree a proof.

---

* Sir Godfrey Kneller affected, in his drollery, to treat his titles of knight and baronet which he possessed, as beneath him; saying, that being a man of genius, he was one of God Almighty's nobles.

† Mem. page 101. ‡ Mem. page 103.

On one of the evenings, when Sir Joshua delivered his discourse to the Royal Academy, the audience, as usual on those occasions, was numerous; composed not only of artists but also of the learned and the great. The Earl of C——, who was one of the company present, came up to him immediately after he had finished his lecture, saying, "Sir Joshua, you read your discourse in so low a tone that I did not distinguish one word you said." To which the president, with a smile, replied "That was to my advantage."

I have noticed, in the Memoir, Johnson's approbation of Dr. Farmer's pamphlet, concerning the degree of knowledge Shakespeare might possess of the ancients; and, in recurrence to that pamphlet, it is true, that whether Shakespeare knew much or nothing of the ancients, may have been decided by Dr. Farmer; but who can decide on which part would have been the greatest gain? That of Shakespeare in having known the ancients, or the ancients by having known Shakespeare.

I have, in the Memoirs,* recorded the extraordinary number of paintings sent by Sir Joshua to the exhibition during its progress: and in this place, as a proof of the advance that the arts had made in England, even as early as 1769, I shall mention that the pictures which chiefly attracted the attention of the connoisseurs at this first season of the Royal Academy exhibition in Pall-Mall, were the departure of Regulus from Rome, and Venus lamenting the Death of Adonis, both by Mr. West; Hector and Andromache, Venus directing Æneas and Achates, by Mrs. Angelica Kauffman, a lady who was

* Mem. page 111.

but lately arrived in London; the King and Queen, by Mr. Nathaniel Dance; Lady Molyneux, by Mr. Gainsborough; a piping Boy, a candle-light piece, by Mr. Hone; an altar-piece of the Annunciation, by Mr. Cipriani; the character of Hebe, the Duke of Glocester, and a Boy playing at Cricket, by Mr. Cotes; a capital landscape, containing a view of Penton Lynn, in Scotland, by Mr. Barrett; and the Smith, described by Shakespeare in King John, with open mouth swallowing a Taylor's news, by Mr. Penny: to these we must add, Sir Joshua Reynolds' portraits of the Duchess of Manchester and her Son, as Diana disarming Cupid; the portrait of Lady Blake, as Juno receiving the cestus from Venus; and the portrait of Miss Morris, as Hope nursing Love.

This Miss Morris, I must observe, was a beautiful young lady, who, from the unexpected misfortunes of her family, was reduced to the necessity of seeking some employment for a livelihood; and being supposed to have requisite talents for the stage, she was advised by her friends to attempt it as a profession. Sir Joshua Reynolds, Dr. Johnson, and many other illustrious persons, who were her particular friends and patrons, attended on the first night of her appearance on any stage, when she was to perform the character of Juliet, at Covent-Garden theatre; but from the exceeding delicacy, of both her mind and body, she was overpowered by her timidity, to such a degree, that she fainted away on her first entrance on the stage, and with much difficulty was prevailed on to go through the part. This very pitiable young lady, shortly after fell into a deep decline, which ended in her death. Her mother was, I think, a native of the West

Indies, and, on the death of her husband, who had been governor of one of the islands, came over to England, with a son and two daughters, and also a negro slave, who afterwards became the servant of Sir Joshua.*

In honor of the King's birth-day, which was kept on Monday the fifth of June, and the first which had occurred after the institution of the Royal Academy, the body of Royal Academicians gave an entertainment at their house in Pall-Mall; and, as a token of their grateful sense of his Majesty's favour to them, a splendid illumination in the evening was displayed, with transparent paintings, and lamps of various colours, occupying the whole front of the Royal Academy. In the centre compartment appeared a graceful female figure seated, representing Painting, surrounded with Genii, some of which guided her pencil, whilst others dictated subjects to her: at her feet were various youths employed in the study of the art; and over her head hovered a celestial form, representing Royal Munificence, attended by several other figures supporting a cornucopia filled with honors and rewards. This whole piece was executed by Mr. Cipriani, R. A.

On the left side of Painting, in another compartment, Sculpture was represented by a female figure, standing upon a rock of marble, holding in one hand an antique bust, and in the other the chisel and mallet. This compartment was executed by Mr. West, R. A.

---

* She was the daughter of Valentine Morris, esq. the original possessor and improver of the romantic, and much admired domain of Piercefield, in Monmouthshire; in the adornment of which he had expended much money, and deranged his private fortune. Miss Morris made her first appearance at Covent Garden theatre on November 29, 1768; and died May the first, 1769.

On the right side of Painting, in a third compartment, was represented, by another female figure, Architecture, in a contemplative attitude, holding in her hand a pair of compasses, being surrounded with buildings, and having at her feet the basket and acanthus root, which are said to have given rise to the Corinthian order. This subject was executed by Mr. Nathaniel Dance, R. A.

Immediately above the centre compartment was a tablet with this inscription, "Royal Academy of Arts, instituted MDCCLXVIII." And upon the tablet was placed a medallion, in which were represented the portraits of their Majesties, by Mr. Penny, R. A. The medallion was surrounded with festoons of laurel, roses, and myrtle intertwined, and with trophies of arms, and attributes of Venus and the Graces, painted by Mr. Richards, R. A.

Some parts of the front were adorned with trophies alluding to the different arts of design, painted by Mr. Richards and Mr. Wale, R. A. And others were enriched with stars and various figures in lamps of different colours; the top of the building was terminated with a large Imperial Crown and various pyramids, &c. in lamps of different colours.

It should be noticed, that exhibitions of transparencies were at the time quite a novelty, so much so indeed that nothing of the kind had hitherto been seen; in addition to which, this was the joint work of the first painters in the kingdom, and therefore was viewed by the populace with astonishment and delight; since then, however, from the vast increase of artists in the nation, transparencies are become so common that they are little thought of, and commonly very indifferently executed.

The instance of Mr. Barron proves the ill effects of talent when dissipated;* for being divided between music and painting, he in the end became master of neither: the brevity of human life affords not time to conquer even one of those sciences, as

> " One science only will one genius fit,
> So vast is art, so small is human wit;
> Not only bounded to peculiar arts,
> But oft in those confined to single parts."

Whilst speaking of Sir Joshua's pupils,† I shall take the liberty to introduce an anecdote of Mr. Gill's father, as it was related to me by the son Charles.

Mr. Gill, senior, the noted pastry-cook of Bath, was a stout well-made athletic man, that might intimidate, even by his appearance only; and as he was travelling once in a post-chaise alone, on the road between London and Bath, it was his chance to espy a highwayman making his way up to the chaise with an intention to rob him. At this, Mr. Gill's heart failed him; and in order to get the fearful business over as quick as possible, he took out his purse in readiness to deliver it to the highwayman, even before it was demanded; and when the robber approached near to the chaise-window, Gill not being very deliberate in what he did, and eager to show his willingness to comply with any demand that should be made, thrust his head through the window, not perceiving, in his hurry, that the glass was up, and broke it into shivers. This violent act alarmed the highwayman, who concluded it must be the result of invincible intrepidity, and accordingly he turned about his horse, and immediately rode off, thinking

---

* Mem. page 16. † Mem. page 116.

it best not to have any thing to do with such a lion-hearted fellow: but Gill, still apprehending danger, thought the robber would take him by surprize, by firing his pistol at him through the back of the carriage; and therefore, to be the more secure, he instantly laid himself down at the bottom of the chaise, and thus continued his journey.

At the time Miss Reynolds * was in Paris, (as she informed me,) she attended a sale of pictures. It was a most capital collection, yet the sale was so private, that the catalogue was not printed, but handed about the room on a written paper. The collection contained many very fine portraits by Titian and Vandyke, besides various other subjects by the most eminent masters, particularly one by Rembrandt, historical, with figures the full size of life. On her describing the picture afterwards to Sir Joshua, he said it must, by her account of it, have been worth three thousand pounds at least. All of those she saw sold for next to nothing, for there were but few bidders in the room; and being without money herself to make purchases, she saw with inward torture those precious articles knocked down for the most trifling sums. Indeed, the regret she felt at not being able to possess herself of such bargains had so great an effect on her, that she feared she should have fainted away in the auction-room, Some few she did buy, and at a very small price, which were very fine; these she sent to England, to her brother Sir Joshua, who, unluckily, not having a sufficient reliance on her judgment in pictures,

* Mem. page 116.

had not previously commissioned her to make any purchases for him.

Miss Reynolds had accompanied Miss Flint to Paris, as mentioned in the Memoirs. This Miss Flint afterwards became Madame de Reverall, having married one of the noblesse of France, and being left a widow, the unfortunate lady, together with her only son, was guillotined by those wretches who possessed the power in the reign of terror.

Miss Frances Reynolds had long lived in the house of Sir Joshua, her brother, which she superintended in its domestic economy; but conceived, on some occasion, that she had not been so kindly treated as she deserved. This occasioned a small degree of coolness between them, and it was her intention to compose a letter, in order to explain to him her supposed grievances; but the composition of this letter was an affair of great difficulty: she, therefore, consulted with her sage friend Dr. Johnson, who participated with her in her troubles, and voluntarily offered to write a letter himself, which when copied should pass as her own. This accordingly he performed; but when this letter was produced by him for her approval, she felt herself obliged to reject it, as the whole contents of it were so very unlike her own diction, and so decidedly like his, that the intended deception would no more have passed with Sir Joshua, than if Johnson had attired himself in her cap and gown, and endeavoured to impose his identical person upon Sir Joshua as his sister.

The circumstance stated in page 147 of the Memoirs, occurred at a dinner party at Mr. Thrale's; and as the account given by Mrs. Piozzi deserves some notice, I shall repeat that when Sir Joshua Reynolds mentioned some picture as excellent,

"It has often grieved me, Sir, (said Dr. Johnson) to see so much mind as the science of painting requires, laid out upon such perishable materials: why do you not oftener make use of copper? I could wish your superiority, in the art you profess, to be preserved on stuff more durable than canvas." Sir Joshua urged the difficulty of procuring a plate large enough for historical subjects, and was going to raise further observations:—"What foppish obstacles are these!" (exclaimed on a sudden Dr. Johnson:) "Here is Thrale has a thousand ton of copper; you may paint it all round if you will, I suppose; it will serve him to brew in afterwards: will it not, Sir?" (speaking to Mr. Thrale, who sat by.) Indeed, Dr. Johnson's *affectation* of utter scorn of painting was such, that he used to say that he should sit very quietly in a room hung round with the works of the greatest masters, and never feel the slightest disposition to turn them, if their backs were outermost, unless it might be for the sake of telling Sir Joshua that he had turned them. But in his life of Savage, we find him far more cruel and unjust towards another profession, where he expresses his utter scorn of actors likewise, only because he wished to mortify Garrick, whose affluence, acquired in that profession, was the object of his envy. It was the prosperity of Sir Joshua also, as well as Garrick's, that was the crime with Johnson; notwithstanding the friendship and indulgence with which they both always treated him, yet their worldly superiority created bitterness in his heart; and as he could not humble or despise the men, he therefore vented his spleen on their professions. Johnson had that weakness likewise which commonly attends men of all professions, of estimating that as the highest of which they know the most; thus we see how the bad pas-

sions may mislead the wisest men. But what most consoled his haughty spirit was to indulge himself in a philosophical contemplation of those who, possessing great abilities, were yet more wretched than himself, and as such had his compassion. Savage was his darling, in whose cause no labour nor ingenuity was to be spared in the attempt to vindicate the conduct of an impostor, chained down to misery by vice; but Savage he felt was his inferior; and had Garrick or Sir Joshua been as wretched as Savage, he would readily have done them as much service, and not have *pretended* to despise their professions.

Johnson ought to have reflected, that much of the prosperity of Sir Joshua and Garrick was a natural consequence of their virtues as well as of their abilities; and of an application incessant and untired, even to the injury of their constitutions, in order to become eminent in the departments they had adopted: whilst he was loitering away his time in idleness, and feeding at another man's table, whose profession or trade he held also in utter scorn. No wonder Johnson was not rich!

That he did not really in his heart despise painting, and was not so ignorant of its uses, may be seen in the accompanying observations * on the department of portrait painting alone.

Johnson should have been informed also, that the duration of a picture does not depend on the strength or durability of the canvas on which it is painted. The canvas can be renewed as often as it may be found necessary, and the colours will in time become nearly as hard and as durable as enamel. It is by frequent and injudicious cleaning, and not by time, that pictures are destroyed.

---

* Mem. page 147.

In addition to what I have said on one branch of the art,* I must not omit that there is another cause that operates much against the dignity of portraiture; which is, that the work is executed in the presence of witnesses who see the slow progress of the business, and are made not only sensible of the difficulty and care with which the work is done, but also the frequent failure of the artist in his intentions. They can likewise interfere with their advice and directions, and often think themselves as well qualified to judge in the affair as the painter himself: thus they see the work in all its stages of rude imperfection, all of which tend to degrade both the artist and his art in their estimation.

But on the contrary, with respect to those efforts of the mind which are never seen by the world till they are brought to their most perfect and finished state, where all the helps and all the failures have been kept in secret, and the work shown in public only when brought to the state of perfection, it then appears like a miracle, as if struck off at once by magic power; for it has been well observed that *poets*

> " ——— Would not have half the praise they 've got,
> Was it but known what they discreetly blot."

There is still another cause which has its weight against the importance of portraits, even sometimes when executed by good painters, as in particular instances it has rendered them ridiculous; this has happened when the artist has submitted to the ignorant interference and dictates of his employer, contrary to his own better judgment.

---

* Mem. page 149.

Sir Joshua preserved himself from this disgrace with eminent policy and skill.

I cannot quit this subject without noticing that it may be observed that every portrait is a compound, the different parts of which are supplied by the painter, assisted by the person who sits to be pourtrayed. The external form and shape of the features are the part required and taken from the individual who is to be represented in the picture: but the character, the degree of mental power, and peculiarity of disposition, expressed in the portrait, are greatly dependent on the painter, and it is in the representation of those that he unconsciously infuses the prominent qualities of his own individual nature and turn of mind. Therefore, all portraits of the same person, when executed by different painters, will, from the above cause, differ from each other; although each of them may resemble the external form of the individual they are intended to represent.

In portraiture, perhaps, the first thing required is mechanical dexterity.

In history, certainly, the first requisite is great mental powers.

But to attain superior excellence in either, each is required in each.

The events recorded in reference to portrait painting, bring to my recollection one or two little anecdotes connected with the art; in particular, I remember once, in conversation with a friend, oberving that I thought the highest merit and the greatest difficulty in painting portraits were to make them all appear to represent ladies or gentlemen.

"Undoubtedly," answered my friend, "it must indeed be very

difficult for the painter to do it, as nature itself seems to have found it no easy business by having so very rarely made them such in appearance."

With respect to that excellent portrait of our great tragic actress in which Reynolds has written his name on the skirt of the drapery, Mrs. Siddons told me herself that when she first saw the picture in its finished state, she went near to examine the pattern of this which appeared to be a curious classic embroidery, such being at that time much in fashion, and she then perceived it contained his name; when making the remark to Sir Joshua, who was present, he very politely said, "I could not lose the honour this opportunity offered to me for my name going down to posterity on the hem of your garment."

In contradistinction to the unfounded criticisms on Reynolds's style of painting,* already given as extracted from "Letters from England," I trust that Sir Joshua's own remarks on the subject of criticisms on the art will not here be misplaced.

"When a picture by a gaudy copier, done in a false and bad taste, is shewn to some pretended connoisseurs who may have been used to see good pictures, they will immediately and properly disapprove of it: not because it is in reality in a bad taste, but because it has a different appearance from those pictures which have been shewn to them as the best; for in other matters it will be found that their taste is utterly vulgar, false, and depraved, whilst he who has formed to himself a really good taste† will be uniform throughout in his judgment.

* Mem. page 166.

† What we call *Taste* is a kind of *extempore* judgment; it is a settled habit of distinguishing, without staying to attend to rules, or ratiocination, and arises from long use and experience.

" Out of the great number of critics in this metropolis, who all pretend to knowledge in pictures, the greater part must be mere pretenders only. Taste does not come by chance: it is a long and laborious task to acquire it; the mind, like a pendulum, must waver this way and that way, before it fixes upon the centre."

Again, speaking of critics, he says,

" We find the noblest and boldest passages to have been particularly pitched upon for impertinent criticism. These are the divine boldnesses which in their very nature provoke ignorance and short-sightedness to shew themselves; and whoever is capable of attaining the greatest height, knows for certain he shall be attacked by such as cannot reach it."

After this judgment of Sir Joshua's upon critics and criticism on the art, I shall venture to give some opinions of my own on the subject, particularly as they are not in opposition to those recorded.

It has often struck me as matter of wonder why we should so frequently meet with persons who are good judges of literature, yet so seldom with those who are competent judges of the graphic arts; and the only way I know to account for this seeming paradox is, to conclude that the language of the art, as it has been termed, is, to the bulk of the world, obscure, or at least far from being familiar to them: yet all conceive themselves qualified to be critics on paintings. As to those numerous connoisseurs in art, whose essays we commonly meet with in the inferior publications, such as daily newspapers, &c. &c. it is both curious and diverting to observe the very odd remarks which they make on the arts, from not having sufficiently studied them. This incompetency to the undertaking gives such an air of childish innocence to their prattle, that,

whilst it has no bad motive, no disguised malice at the bottom, it seems a pity to check it; and the severest punishment I would inflict upon them is, that they should be enabled to view their own criticisms with an artist's conception, which would be the most effectual means of putting a stop to such inanity; for many of those whose criticisms on pictures make them appear to be so very silly in the eyes of artists, are frequently men of very good understanding, and show much judgment in many other matters which come within the sphere of their study, and they would feel severely the contemptible figure they make in uttering opinions frequently so weak, that boys in the schools of art would scorn, and laugh at them: and although these critics conceal their names, and are themselves hid in obscurity, yet, as no one can bear to appear contemptible in his own eyes, surely a man can find no pleasure in its being proved to him that he has played the fool. This description alludes to the attempts at criticism by the innocent and ignorant; but we have to lament, that but too often ephemeral criticism is made the instrument of some base and partial purpose of interest. At times it proceeds from some ill-starred wight, who pines with envy at the sight of those powers which he cannot attain. He fain would blast that fruit which he cannot gather. Every human work, besides its excellencies, does most commonly contain a large proportion of defects; and to point out those defects is too often the sole gratification which feeds the vanity of the superficially learned, who imagine that they are exalted in the same proportion as they contribute to the degradation of every pretender to talents. It also, in some degree, soothes the feelings of the unsuccessful and malignant, by persuading them that

they have still the power of making their more fortunate competitors, at least for a time, as uncomfortable as themselves: they likewise feel at the moment as if they were really superior to the work over which they seem to triumph, which acts as a cordial to their self-opinion, as an opiate to tortured pride. But it should he recollected that the critic, in reviewing the object of his criticism, has the advantage of the inventor's experience to assist him, and, thus prepared, finds it not difficult to point out how the work might have been done better; when, perhaps, from his own resources alone, he might not have been able to conceive at first how the work could have been done at all.

Criticism, when poured out by the weak or vulgar, has in some cases very bad effects. It has a tendency to intimidate the modest and inexperienced spirit, who dreads the clamour of presumptuous ignorance usurping an office, and peremptorily pretending to set rules for those powers which it cannot comprehend; and it overawes that spirit of exertion which cannot operate with full effect, unless it be perfectly free from fear of controul. To 'snatch a grace beyond the rules of art' is only to be hoped for by those who defy the puny critic and his censures—the steed which attempts a leap beyond his usual course should fear no check from the rein, as it would inevitably cause both the horse and his rider to fall.

Thus we see that criticism has the fatal tendency to paralize those laudable and energetic efforts to produce works, without which criticism could not exist: criticism is the child that devours its own parent!

The only good that possibly can accrue from the observations of those obtrusive minor critics on works of living artists

(for as to the dead, there is always justice administered to those against whom no evil passions operate,) is, that sometimes, by chance, they may throw out a useful hint; and also, that the noise they make serves in the place of an advertisement. But if what they have to say is not truth, the little hurt falls only on themselves; yet, if truth is on their side, they have an indubitable right to speak it. Notwithstanding, however, that at times their ignorance, or their pertness, is displeasing, they still should be viewed with complacency. In these observations, indeed, it is but fair to state, that I allude solely to those who, being unable to make a figure equal to their ambition in a higher department, and yet unwilling to be set wholly aside, consent to practise the virtue of humility, patiently join the retinue of those who are more fortunate than themselves, and are to be considered as proper appendages to eminence, or in the capacity of train-bearers: and although the office they appear in is to hold up to public view that superfluous part of the garment of merit which is nearest to the dust, yet it still adds dignity even to genius: whilst *real criticism*, like a tender parent, improves as it admonishes; the justice of its award softening even the severity of its censure.

As a relief after the dry subject of criticism, any anecdotes of Reynolds's paintings must be acceptable; in addition, therefore, to the circumstances connected with the "Ugolino,"* I may here record that the picture of the "Children in the Wood" by Sir Joshua may be said also to have been produced by an accident, at least as an historical composition: for when

* Mem. page 179.

the Beggar Infant, who was sitting to him for some other picture, during the sitting fell asleep, Reynolds was so pleased with the innocence of the object, that he would not disturb its repose to go on with the picture on which he was engaged, but took up a fresh canvas, and quickly painted the child's head as it lay before it moved; and as the infant altered its position, still in sleep, he sketched another view of its head on the same canvas. He afterwards finished a back ground of a woody scenery, and by adding the robin red-breast converted it into the subject of the Children in the Wood.*

It may not be undeserving of notice, that there is a duplicate of the Infant Jupiter possessed by the Duke of Rutland; as I well remember having prepared a copy for Sir Joshua in a ground-work on black and white.

Since the publication of the Memoirs, I have recollected many anecdotes of Goldsmith, during his intercourse with Reynolds, connected with which I may relate, that when the play of "She stoops to Conquer," was in preparation at the theatre, Miss Reynolds, with a few other ladies, her friends, accompanied by Dr. Goldsmith, went one morning to the house to attend its rehearsal. Mr. Shuter afterwards performed a principal character in this play; in which he displayed infinite spirit; yet when he appeared before this small and select audience, he betrayed the strongest marks of shyness, even to

* The mother of the beggar infant at one time had nearly given a finale to Sir Joshua's studies from this subject, whilst he was employed in painting from it, by carelessly letting the child fall over her arm on the floor, which, as she sat at the time in a chair raised some height above it, made the fall very considerable; but, by great good fortune, the child received no material injury from the accident.

bashfulness: which proves that the smallest novelty in situation, or deviation from accustomed habits, is sufficient to discompose the veteran professor; for when Shuter appeared before a crowded house, he always felt himself perfectly easy.*

It was about this period that Goldsmith, ever jealous of being thought insignificant, and on this occasion much offended with Garrick, who he conceived had treated him with great hauteur. In relating the matter to Sir Joshua, he said he could not suffer such airs of superiority from one who was only a poor player; but Sir Joshua replied, "No, no, don't say that; he is no *poor* player surely."

Speaking to Sir Joshua concerning Goldsmith, I asked his opinion of him as a poet, and if he did not consider him as very excellent: his answer was, that Goldsmith, as a poet, he believed, was about the degree of Addison.

Goldsmith, it is well known, was of an imprudent and careless disposition, insomuch, that I have heard Sir Joshua remark of him, in times of his greatest distress, he was often obliged to supplicate a friend for the loan of ten pounds for his immediate relief, yet, if by accident a distressed petitioner told him a piteous tale, nay if a subscription for any folly was

* I remember another similar instance, which a late illustrious General told me of himself; that being at Dover with his regiment, the King, Queen, and many others of the Royal Family, together with Mr. Pitt, and many ministers of state as well as courtiers, came to see the review, which was to take place that morning, he commanding as the General: when, being in the presence of personages so conspicuously high, either for rank or talents, he confessed that he felt, while conversing with them, an aukward shyness; but immediately on mounting his horse, and manœuvring at the head of his troops, he became as perfectly unembarrassed as if he was at home; and could not help laughing to himself, when he saw what droll figures some of the courtiers made when mounted on chargers.

proposed to him, he, without any thought of his own poverty, would, with an air of generosity, freely bestow on the person, who solicited for it, the very loan he had himself but just before obtained.

On a subject so important as the improvement of our national buildings,* there can be nothing superfluous in giving the following account of the origin of a scheme for decorating the cathedral of St. Paul's with paintings by living artists, which was thus related to me as authentic.

"Dr. Newton, late bishop of Bristol, and dean of St. Paul's, was an enthusiastic admirer and lover of the arts, and also a great friend to artists. One day, Sir Joshua Reynolds and Mr. West were dining with him at his house, and, in the course of conversation, one of them observed how great an ornament it would be to that cathedral if it were to be furnished with appropriate paintings to fill up those large vacant compartments and pannels, and which the architect, Sir Christopher Wren himself had purposed to have added to finish the building. On this, Mr. West generously offered to give a picture of his own painting, and Sir Joshua cheerfully agreed to follow his example, in order to make a beginning. Mr. West proposed to paint the subject of Moses with the Laws; and Sir Joshua offered a Nativity. The bishop was enraptured with the plan; and he, being dean of St. Paul's, concluded that his influence was fully sufficient to produce a completion of the business.

"The guardians of the cathedral are the King, the archbishop of Canterbury, the bishop of London, and the dean and

* Mem. page 198.

chapter of St. Paul's, and the lord-mayor of London, for the time being.

"The good Dr. Newton first went to the King, whose ready and hearty consent was immediately given, as were likewise those of the archbishop, and also of the lord mayor; and the chapter, with the dean at their head, of course, had no objection. But unluckily, the very person who possessed most power in that church, was the last consulted on the business; that was Dr. Terrick, then bishop of London: and when Dr. Newton paid him a visit to inform him of the hopeful progress he had made and to receive his consent, the old bishop patiently heard him to the end of his speech, when, assuming a very grave countenance, he replied, "My good lord bishop of Bristol, I have already been distantly and imperfectly informed of such an affair having been in contemplation; but as the sole power at last remains with myself, I therefore inform your lordship, that, whilst I live and have the power, I will never suffer the doors of the metropolitan church to be opened for the introduction of popery into it."*

* It is but justice to the memory of the learned prelate to give the following, which is bishop Newton's own account of the design of ornamenting St. Paul's cathedral, of which church he was dean and a great friend to the project; but it is observable, that the bishop says nothing of the society for the encouragement of arts.——

"As he, the bishop, was known to be such a lover of their art, the Royal Academy of painters, in 1773, made an application to him by their worthy president, Sir Joshua Reynolds, representing, that the art of painting, notwithstanding the present encouragement given to it in England, would never grow up to maturity and perfection, unless it could be introduced into churches as in foreign countries, individuals being, for the most part, fonder of their own portraits, and those of their

"Dr. Newton was much mortified at the refusal, and reflected upon himself as having destroyed the project by his indiscreet

---

families, than of any historical pieces: that, to make a beginning, the royal academicians offered their services to the dean and chapter to decorate St. Paul's with Scripture histories, and six of their members, Sir Joshua Reynolds, Mr. West, Angelica Kauffman, Cipriani, Mr. Barry, and, I think, Mr. Dance had been chosen to paint each a picture for this purpose; that these pictures should be seen and examined and approved by the academy before they were offered to the dean and chapter, and the dean and chapter might then give directions for alterations and amendments, and receive or refuse them as they thought them worthy or unworthy of the places for which they were designed: none should be put up but such as were entirely approved, and they should all be put up at the charge of the academy, without any expense to the members of the church. St. Paul's had all along wanted some such ornaments, for rich and beautiful as it is without, it is too plain and unadorned within.

"Sir James Thornhill had painted the history of St. Paul in the cupola, the worst part of the church that could have been painted, for the pictures there are most exposed to the changes of the weather, suffer greatly from damp and heat, and, let what will be done to prevent it, it is to be feared, must, in no very long time, all decay and perish. It was happy, therefore, that Sir James's eight original sketches and designs, which were higher finished than usual, in order to be carried and shewn to Queen Anne, were purchased of his family, at the recommendation of the dean, in the year 1779, and are hung up in the great room at the Chapter House. Besides the exposition of these pictures to the weather, in the cupola, they are at such a height, that they cannot conveniently be seen from any part, and add little to the beauty and ornament of the church. They had better have been placed below, for below they would have been seen, and there are compartments which were originally designed for bas-reliefs, or such like decorations, but the parliament, as it is said, having taken part of the fabric money, and applied it to King William's wars, Sir Christopher Wren complained that his wings were clipt, and the church was deprived of its ornaments. Here, then, a fair opportunity was offered for retrieving the loss and supplying former defect. It was certainly a most generous and noble offer on the part of the academicians, and the public ought to think themselves greatly obliged to them for it. The dean and chapter were all equally pleased with it; and the dean, in the fullness of his heart,

management, in not having made his first application to the offended bishop of London."

---

went to communicate it to the great patron of arts, and readily obtained his royal consent and approbation. But the trustees of the fabric, the archbishop of Canterbury, and the bishop of London, were also to be consulted, and they disapproved of the measure. Bishop Terrick, both as trustee of the fabric, and as bishop of the diocese, strenuously opposed it; whether he took it amiss, that the proposal was not first made to him, and by him the intelligence conveyed to his Majesty; or whether he was really afraid, as he said, that it would occasion a great noise and clamour against it, as an artful introduction of popery. Whatever were his reasons, it must be acknowledged that some other serious persons disapproved the setting up of pictures in churches. It was in truth not an object of that concern, as to run the risk of a general outcry and clamour against it; but the general opinion plainly appeared to be on the contrary side, much in favour of the scheme; and, whatever might have been the case in the days of our first reformers, there was surely no danger now of pictures seducing our people into popery and idolatry; they would only make scripture history better known and remembered. Many other churches and chapels have adopted, and are adopting, this measure, as Rochester, Winchester, Salisbury, St. Stephen's Walbrook, and several colleges in the universities. The House of Commons have given a rich painted window to their church of St. Margaret's, Westminster. Bishop Terrick himself approved, if not contributed to the setting up of a picture of the Annunciation, by Cipriani, in the chapel of his own college of Clare-Hall, at Cambridge: and why should such ornaments be denied to the capital church in the kingdom? The Dean, rather than the scheme should be totally laid aside, proposed to make a trial and experiment how the thing would bear. Most churches and chapels, he observed, have something of ornament and decoration about the communion table. You sometimes see, even in the country,

> Moses and Aaron upon a church wall,
> Holding up the Commandments for fear they should fall.

But St. Paul's will not well admit of any ornament over the communion table, because it would darken the windows there, which give the principal light to the choir. But near to the communion table are two doors, one opening into the north and the other into the south aisle; and over these two doors are proper compartments for two pictures. It was therefore proposed by the Dean, that Sir Joshua

I have already recorded much criticism, and some censure,* respecting the emblematical portrait of Beattie, but it

* Mem. page 204.

Reynolds and Mr. West should paint these two pictures; Mr. West's design being the giving of the two tables to Moses from the cloud of glory, the people all standing beneath; and Sir Joshua's design being the infant Jesus lying in the manger, with the shepherds surrounding, and the light flowing all from the Child, as in the famous Notte of Corregio: here was the beginning both of the Law and of the Gospel; here was nothing to encourage superstition or idolatry; nothing that could possibly give any one any just offence. Let the trial only be made by these pictures; and if they occasion any noise and clamour, then let an end be put to the whole affair; if they are well received, and approved and applauded by the public, then let the other artists proceed. But reasonable as this proposition was generally thought to be, it was over-ruled by the same authority as the former; and whether the merits or demerits are greater of those who favoured the design, or of those who defeated it, the present age and impartial posterity must judge. Sir Joshua has wrought up his design into a noble picture; Mr. West exhibited his drawing at one of the public exhibitions of the Royal Academy. Mr. Barry has published an etching of his design, the fall of the angels, both excellent, both masterly performances; and it is much to be wished that the other artists would follow their example."

"Some time before this, another opportunity was unfortunately lost of decorating St. Paul's. When Bishop Newton was only one of the residentiaries, a statuary of some note came to him in his summer month of residence, desiring leave to set up a monument in St. Paul's for one who had formerly been a Lord Mayor and Representative of the city of London. The Dean and his other brethren of the chapter being in the country, he went to consult with Archbishop Secker upon the subject; and Archbishop Secker was so far from making any objection, that he much approved the design of monuments, saying what advantages foreign churches have over ours, and that St. Paul's was too naked and bare, for want of monuments, which would be a proper ornament, and give a venerable air to the church, provided care was taken that there be nothing improper in their structure, or in the inscriptions upon them. But when the thing was proposed to Bishop Osbaldeston, he was violent against it: Sir Christopher Wren had designed no such things; there had been no monuments in all the time before he was Bishop, and in his time there

would be the height of injustice to accuse Dr. Beattie of the least blame in respect to the composition of this picture; as the head alone was the only part of it that was finished when the Doctor left London, and returned to Scotland: nor was he consulted by, or had the least knowledge of Sir Joshua's intention till the picture was completely finished; and as it was the design of Reynolds to make a present of this picture to the Doctor, there was the more propriety in not consulting him upon it, for he thus purposed to pay him a high and elegant

---

should be none. He was desired to look upon the print which hung over his head of the inner section of St. Paul's, wherein he would see that Sir Christopher Wren had designed monuments, especially in the recesses under the windows; but he was not to be convinced; churches, he said, were better without monuments than with them. Since the Bishop was so peremptory, it was judged proper not to push the matter any farther; especially since the person for whom the monument was desired was not one of the most illustrious characters, nor deserving to be the first instance of the kind. Few, I conceive, will agree in opinion with Bishop Osbaldeston, that churches are better without monuments than with them. The sense of mankind has been contrary in all ages and in all countries; and it is really a wonder that no more applications have been made for erecting monuments in St. Paul's. Westminster Abbey is too full of them. It may be said to be incrusted with monuments, and in some places they are ridiculously piled two stories high over one another. At St. Paul's there is ample room, and spaces designed for monuments: and what a magnificent and glorious church would it be with a proper intermixture of pictures and statues, and what an ornament and honour to the metropolis and to the kingdom! The great difficulty is to find a suitable person to begin with, of eminence and dignity sufficient to set an example to the rest. Several gentlemen were desirous of opening a public subscription for a monument to Mr. Pope in St. Paul's, as had been done to Shakespeare in Westminster Abbey: but Mr. Pope's religion was some objection to this scheme. It was a better thought of erecting the first monument to Bishop Sherlock, whose father had been Dean, and himself Bishop of London so many years."—*Bishop Newton's Life and Anecdotes, prefixed to his Works*, 1782, 4to. I. pp. 105—109.

compliment on his book on the Immutability of Truth. Neither could the Doctor, afterwards, when he saw it, with any kind of decorum, make objections to this valuable present, given to him as a special token of friendship: and, indeed, after all, it must be clearly perceived, that the whole of the clamour raised about this portrait was the sole produce of envy and ignorance.

The hint for the composition of this memorable picture (as I have been informed) Sir Joshua received from a fine picture by Tintoretto, of a subject somewhat similar which is in the King's library at Buckingham House. As to the portrait of Voltaire, that Sir Joshua certainly intended to represent in the group, for I well remember, at the time, his having a medal of him, from which he copied the likeness. But as to Hume, I am as certain that he never intended to place him in the picture, nor is there any such resemblance, or the least reason to suppose that the painter thought of him at the time. We see in the above instance how easily envy can swell a mole-hill to a mountain.

To the record of poor Goldsmith's death,* I may add one or two anecdotes not generally known.

I have been informed by the lady who requested a lock of his hair before interment, that he once read to her several chapters of a novel in manuscript which he had in contemplation; but which he did not live to finish, now irrecoverably lost. The same person has also some of his poetry, never yet published.

I have already mentioned Goldsmith's habit of playfulness in

* Mem. page 210.

company, yet it is a fact that a certain nobleman, an intimate friend of Reynolds, had strangely conceived in his mind such a formidable idea of all those persons who had gained great fame as literary characters, that I have heard Sir Joshua say he verily believed he could no more have prevailed upon this noble person to dine at the same table with Johnson and Goldsmith than with two tygers.

Probably Goldsmith was not much mortified at sometimes appearing little in the eyes of those who he knew were his inferiors, as he might console himself that he was able to make them feel his superiority whenever he pleased.

Goldsmith, indeed, may serve as an instance to shew how capriciously nature deals out her gifts to mankind; thus, frequently bestowing on the same individual these qualities which the wisest must admire, accompanied by those which the weakest may despise.

Another instance of the naiveté of genius I remember, but which is much more in character than the antics practised by Goldsmith.

Garrick, one day, dining with a large company, soon after dinner left the room, and it was supposed had left the house; but one of the party, on going into the area to seek him, found Mr. Garrick, who had been there some time, fully occupied in amusing a negro boy who was a servant in the family, by mimicking the manner and noise of a turkey cock, which diverted the boy to such a degree that he was convulsed with laughter, and only able now and then to utter "Oh, Masser Garrick! You will kill me, Masser Garrick!"

Soon after an installation of the Knights of the Garter took place at Windsor Castle, a ceremony which had not been seen

before for many years; and the King had expressed a desire that Sir Joshua might be present, which of course he readily complied with, but in some degree to his cost, for the show being a rare one, the multitude of persons assembled was immense, insomuch that in the crowd Sir Joshua lost his hat, and also a gold snuff-box.

As most of the efforts of Reynolds's pencil deserve notice, I must not omit* that the Dilletanti room is still further indebted to his abilities.

Sir Joshua has enriched the room of this society with many other portraits of its members, particularly two pictures, each of which contains a group of figures, something in the manner of Paul Veronese.

The first has the portraits of the Duke of Leeds, Lord Dundas, Constantine John Lord Mulgrave, Lord Seaforth, the Honourable C. Greville, Charles Crowle, Esq., and the Right Honourable Sir Joseph Banks, Bart., and K. B.

The other picture represents the persons of Sir William Hamilton, Sir Watkin Williams Wynne, Bart., Richard Thompson, Esq., Sir John Taylor, Payn Galway, Esq., John Smith, Esq., and Spencer Stanhope, Esq.

Of another production of our artist, I may relate as an anecdote,† that I recollect Mr. S——, on his return from Italy, calling on Sir Joshua to inform him that he had seen his portrait‡ in the gallery at Florence, and that when the Florentines

---

* Mem. page 217. † Mem. page 220.

‡ Portraits of Sir Joshua are almost innumerable, a great number by his own hand, but there is only one marble bust of him, which was executed by Cirachi, an Italian sculptor.

This Cirachi was a young man of some ability, but of a turbulent spirit, and

expressed to him their high admiration of the excellence of this picture, he told them it was impossible for them to form any judgment of the painter's ample abilities from seeing that single head: but could they only see some of his more extensive compositions, their admiration would then be infinitely greater, as this portrait gave a very inadequate idea of the variety of his powers. There were, at the time, three young painters before this picture, employed in copying it.

The picture of a little strawberry girl, with a kind of turban on her head, was painted about this time,* and he considered it as one of his best works; observing, that no man ever could produce more than about half a dozen really original works in his life, "and that picture," he added, "is one of mine." The picture was exhibited and repeated by him several times; not so much for the sake of profit, as for that of improvement: for he always advised, as a good mode of study, that a painter should have two pictures in hand of precisely the same subject and design, and should work on them alternately; by which means, if chance produced a lucky hit, as it often does, then, instead of working on upon the same piece, and perhaps by that means destroy that beauty which chance had given, he should go to the other and improve upon that. Then return again to the first picture, which he might work upon without any fear of obliterating the excellence which chance had given it, having tran-

---

had been driven from every country which he had visited. When he left England, he went to France, where he soon got himself guillotined for being concerned in a conspiracy formed against the life of Buonaparte, by means of a horrid contrivance which the French named the Infernal Machine.

* 1775.

sposed it to the other. Thus his desire of excellence enabled him to combat with every sort of difficulty or labour. I have heard him say, that while he was engaged in painting a picture, he never knew when to quit it, or leave off; and it seemed to him as if he could be content to work upon it the whole remainder of his life, encouraged by the hope of improving it: but that when it was once gone from him, and out of his house, he as earnestly hoped he should never see it again.

It was in this year, also, that Sir Joshua painted an admirable portrait of Mrs. Hartley, in the character of a gipsey with an infant at her back, and began another of her in the character of Jane Shore. She was much admired when she appeared on the stage; but it was more on account of the extraordinary beauty of her person, than for her professional talents as an actress; her features were of an excellent form, and her complexion very fair and clear; but, as she herself once observed to Sir Joshua, to use her own innocent expression, "her face was as freckled as a toad's belly."

I well recollect, likewise, an excellent portrait which he painted about this period, of a gentleman who had acquired in India more money than intellect. From this picture a print was to be taken. The Nabob went into the country, whence he wrote to Sir Joshua on the subject. In this letter he says, "my friends tell me of the Titian tint and the Guido air, of course you will add them; but I leave it to your judgment whether it should be done before or after the print is taken." This letter I saw and read.

Numberless little anecdotes of this kind might be recorded; I shall venture to mention a trifling one of the late Duchess of Cumberland, who sat to him about this time for her portrait,

full length ; and I remember his being much diverted by her affected condescension, when she said " I come to your house to sit for my portrait, because I thought it would be much more convenient to you, as you would have all your materials about you and at hand." He made her no answer, nor did he trouble himself to inform her, that there was no other way by which she could have had her portrait painted by him : indeed, the great Duke of Cumberland, and many others of the royal family, had not conceived it to be beneath their dignity to come to his house for the same purpose ; and formerly, as he observed, even the king himself, Charles the Second, always went to the houses of Lely and Kneller, whenever he sat for his portrait. However, great allowance must be made for those who are suddenly raised high beyond their expectation, as it not unfrequently has made even the wisest giddy.

Some portion of vanity indeed, ought to be pardoned in every one ; as the happiness of life so much depends upon it : for how could many of us endure our existence with any degree of patience if we saw ourselves as others see us ? Vanity has made many a happy mortal of such as, without it, might have been driven to the crime of suicide. But kind, indulgent Nature, in the gift of this article is ever abundant, always bestowing it most amply where there is most need of its support ; for which we ought to be infinitely thankful, as it fills up all our mental emptiness with delight, and the mind is consoled under all its insufficiencies, or even corporeal imperfections, which, by its assistance, oftentimes assume the form of beauty to our own apprehension. Self-opinion is Nature's stratagem to keep all the world quiet.

The admiration and fame that followed Reynolds, both as a man and an artist, could not fail to excite envy ; an instance

of which has been recorded ;* in addition I may observe, that Mr. Hone did not seem to recollect, that, whenever Sir Joshua availed himself of any of the merits of his predecessors in art, it was done in a manner that all must approve of, and such as the following circumstance may serve to explain, by showing, that he generally had in view the adding to the first invention, much more than he borrowed from it.

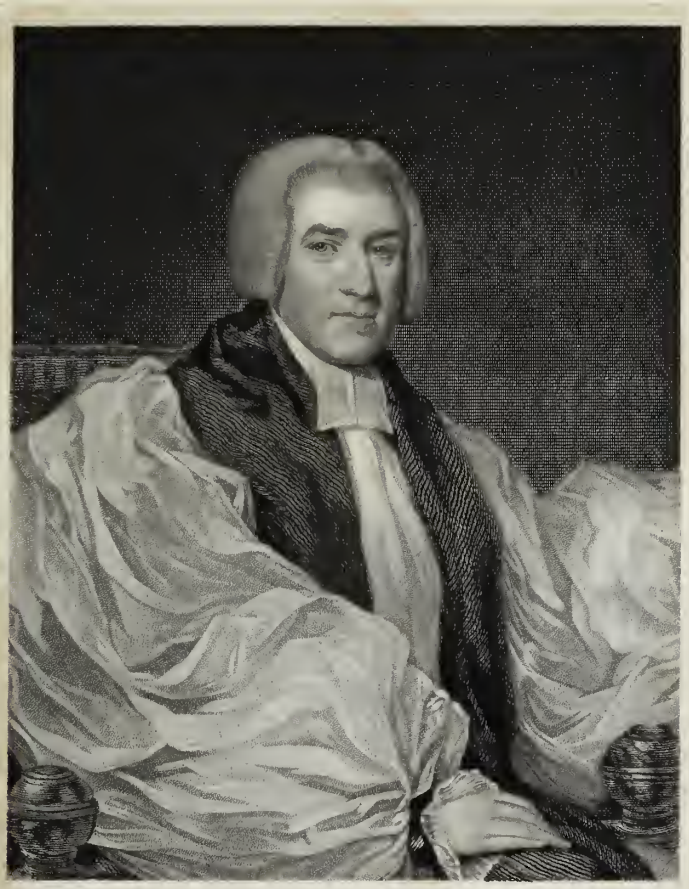
Sir Joshua had in his collection a most excellent little sketch or study, by Rembrant, of a Susanna going down the steps of the bath ; this picture possessed, in the highest degree, the charms of colour, light and shade, and an exquisite expression, in the female figure, of silent, timid apprehension, in the attitude of listening ; but, at the same time, miserably deficient in every requisite towards beauty, grace, elevation of character, or elegance of form. I have heard Sir Joshua lament to see the defects of this picture, which possessed so many perfections, and I often heard him say, he would copy it in its excellencies, and attempt to make the figure of Susanna, as much, as was in his power, what it ought to have been in the original—still preserving the fine expression.

Had he done this, such a combination of two great painters would have produced almost a perfect work.

Whilst thus speaking of Reynolds' practice, I shall add something further with respect to his theory.† In particular, it was Sir Joshua's opinion, that if the vegetable colours (which are infinitely the most beautiful) were enclosed by varnish from the external atmosphere, they would not fade ; however, what he proposed as the remedy was still worse than the disease, as the colour would still fade, added to which the varnish itself would crack.

---

* Mem. page 37. † Mem. page 39.



WILLIAM CAREY D.D LORD BISHOP OF EXETER

W. Exeter

Yet, from experience, he must have been well aware of the pernicious consequences of some of the nostrums (if I may so call them) that he often made use of, as I well remember, he was much displeased with a young painter, who showed him a picture in which experimental mixtures, composed of wax and varnishes of divers sorts, had been used; and afterwards, speaking of him to me, he said, "That boy will never do any good if they do not take away from him all his gallipots of varnish and foolish mixtures:" nor would he suffer me, during the whole time I resided in his house, to make use of any other materials than the common preparations of colour, just as we have them from the hands of the colour-man; and all varnishes, and every kind of experiment, were strictly prohibited. Likewise all his own preparations of colour were most carefully concealed from my sight and knowledge, and perpetually locked secure in his drawers; thus never to be seen or known by any one but himself. In his own practice, however, he would venture on whatever experiment was recommended to him by any adviser that came in his way; and when he was at any time accused of having spoiled many of his portraits, by trying experiments upon them, he answered, that it was always his wish to have made these experiments on his fancy pictures, and if so, had they failed of success, the injury would have fallen only on himself, as he should have kept them on his hands; but that he was prevented from practising thus, by his being at the time perpetually employed in painting portraits; and therefore obliged to make his trials on those, as eagerness in the pursuit of excellence was, in him, uncontroulable.

It was of advantage to the old school of Italian painters, that they were under the necessity of making most of their

colours themselves, or at least under the inspection of such as possessed chymical knowledge, which excluded all possibility of those adulterations to which the moderns are exposed. The same also was the case in England, till the time of Sir Godfrey Kneller, who, when he came to this country, brought over a servant with him, whose sole employment was to prepare all his colours and materials for his work. Kneller afterwards set him up as a colour-maker for artists; and this man's success, he being the first that kept a colour-shop in London, occasioned the practice of it as a trade.

Sir Joshua was ever careful about procuring unadulterated articles of every sort, and has often desired me to inform the colour-man, that he should not regard any price that might be demanded, provided the colours were genuine.

In his investigations also into the secrets used by the old painters, he was indefatigable. I remember once in particular, a fine picture of Parmegiano, that I bought by his order at a sale; which he rubbed and scoured down to the very pannel on which it had been painted, so that at last nothing remained of the picture. Speaking to him of the extraordinary merits of Titian, I asked him, if he thought there ever would be in the world a superior in portrait-painting? he answered, that he believed there never would—that, to procure a real fine picture by Titian, he would be content to sell every thing he possessed in the world, to raise the money for its purchase; adding, with emphasis, "I would be content to ruin myself."

I have already taken notice of the assistance which Sir Joshua received, as usual with painters who are much occupied, in the accessories of his portraits.* One of those assistants,

* Mem. page 231.

Peter Toms, was certainly a very good drapery painter, and, as I have observed in the Memoir, was frequently employed by Sir Joshua in that part of his pictures; but the manner of Toms's pencilling did not exactly harmonize with the style of Sir Joshua's heads, as it was heavy, and wanted freedom, so that his work had too much the appearance of having been done with a stamp, as the paper-hangings for rooms are executed. Sometimes he misunderstood Sir Joshua's intention in the picture; once in particular, in a full length portrait of a lady, instead of painting her in a rural habit, as Sir Joshua had designed, he had turned it into a dress of state. When Sir Joshua saw the picture, he expostulated with Toms, and told him that it would not do by any means, and, in short, that he must paint it all over again. Toms refused, saying he had worked upon the drapery till his heart ached, and he could do no more to it; adding, "you ought to be more explicit when you give the pictures into my hands." Sir Joshua said the drapery did not accord with the head. Toms answered, "that is because your heads are painted on a diminished scale." When Sir Joshua, mistaking him, in a great alarm cried out, "What, do you say that I paint in a little manner? did you say mine is a little manner?" "No," replied Toms, "but I say that your heads are less than the life."

Toms afterwards became very poor, and it is said died a violent death by his own hands.

In the year 1775, Sir Joshua finished the picture of Lady Cockburn with her three children, in one group, and sent it to the Royal Academy. When it was first brought into the room, in order to its being exhibited, all the painters then

present were so struck with its extraordinary splendour and excellence, that they testified their approbation of it by suddenly clapping with their hands.

I observed that at the commencement of this picture, the whole group of figures was so placed on the canvas, as to throw all the principal light too much on one side of the composition, which gave it a very aukward appearance, and created a great difficulty, as it required much consideration to overcome the defect. After many trials, Sir Joshua at last, with true judicious management, illumined the vacant space in the canvas behind the figures, by an opening of most exquisitely coloured landscape in the back ground, which, together with a red curtain, and the gay plumage of a macaw, soon rendered it one of his most happy compositions. On this picture he has marked his name within the embroidered edge of the garment, in the same manner as on the portrait of Mrs. Siddons; and these two are the only pictures in which he has ever done so.

I recollect an anecdote, which helps to prove how difficult he found it ever to satisfy himself in his work, and how desirous he was to make it nearer perfection, even after the best judges were content: for at this time he had painted an excellent head of the Duchess of Leinster, sister to the Duke of Richmond; and when Edmund Burke saw the picture, he exclaimed, "What a beautiful head you have made of this lady! it is impossible to add any thing to its advantage." But Sir Joshua was not satisfied, and answered with much feeling, "It does not please me yet; there is a sweetness of expression in the original which I have not been able to give in the portrait, and therefore cannot think it finished."

Indeed, Sir Joshua was not at all liable to be misled, or even moved, by either praise or flattery from those persons in his presence. He has often remarked that every man is surrounded by his own little circle of admirers, who, influenced by friendship or interest, &c. frequently bestow on him unqualified praise. "But if we desire to learn the real truth," he added, "our view must be extended, and observation and enquiry made of what is thought and said by the world beyond this little and partial set of courtiers."

The Clown in *Shakespeare's Twelfth Night* says, he is the worse for his friends, because they praise him, and make an ass of him; but his foes tell him plainly he is an ass. So that by his foes he profits in the knowledge of himself, and by his friends he is abused.

Mr. R— B— S— related to Sir Joshua,* that a small duodecimo volume had just been published, which professed by its title to contain the Beauties of Shakespeare. "I asked," said Mr. S—, "when this little book was put into my hand, what was become of the other ten volumes?"

I have mentioned some opinions of Burke's, particularly with respect to Gibbon's History; and in that opinion Burke was not singular; as this eminent author, so admired by many, did not please all the judges of literature. Porson, the well-known Greek scholar, was lamenting to a friend that so large a portion of his own youthful time had been spent in acquiring the Greek language. "If I had a son," said he,

* Mem. page 237.

" to educate, I would make him study his native language, and I would give him, as his task every morning, a sufficient portion of the pages of Gibbon for him to translate into plain English."*

It has already been observed,† that Sir Joshua, with true genius, disdained not to draw instruction either from the rudest teachers or from infantine simplicity; in confirmation of which, in one of his manuscript fragments, I find the following observations, which well correspond with the above.

" I cannot but think that Apelles's method of exposing his pictures for public criticism was a very good one. I do not know why the judgment of the vulgar on the mechanical parts of painting should not be as good as any whatever: for instance, as to whether such or such a part be natural or not. If one of those persons should ask why half the face is black, or why there is such a spot of black, or snuff, as they will call

---

* Gibbon used to call frequently on Sir Joshua; and one morning, when I was in the adjoining room, I overheard the conversation, as those who spoke to Sir Joshua were obliged to speak rather in a loud voice on account of his deafness. I remember Gibbon related that a friend of his had, some little time before, bought an old casket, which contained many drawers, when, on making a very strict search into it, he had discovered one secret drawer, which had not been perceived by its latest possessors, and in this drawer he had the good luck to find several pieces of very old gold coin, amounting to five times the price he had given for the casket; but this was not all, he found, also, curiously wrapt up in a piece of paper, a very old fashioned ring for the finger, and on the paper was written, " This is the very ring that Queen Elizabeth gave secretly to the Earl of Essex, and which ring he was to send to her at any time of his distress, as a token of his sincerity and attachment to the Queen."

The sequel of this ring is well known, and that Essex did send it by a traitorous lady, who never delivered it to her Majesty.

† Mem. page 240.

it, under the nose, I should conclude from thence that the shadows are thick, or dirtily painted, or that the shadow under the nose was too much resembling snuff, when, if those shadows had exactly resembled the transparency and colour of nature, they would have no more been taken notice of than the shadow in nature itself. Yet I have seen painters lift up their eyes at such observations, and wrapping themselves up in their own conceit, complain of the want of connoissance in the world in order to value their works as they deserve, never suspecting the fault to be wholly in themselves.

"A painter should nevertheless take care not to condescend too far, and sacrifice his taste to the judgment of the multitude; few of those are capable of giving a good judgment in regard to the delicacy of expression."

Of his sentiments on other subjects unconnected with the practice of art, there are many that come to my recollection; in particular,* when I related to him that old Mr. James Ferguson, the astronomer, was offered the Fellowship of the Royal Society, without solicitation or expense, yet when informed of it, asked "what he should gain by it?" and the answer was, that it was an honour conferred on him gratuitously, for which others were very willing to pay; "Ah," said Mr. Ferguson, "I do not want honour, I want bread!" Sir Joshua observed, that the obtaining of honours was the means of obtaining bread.

Sir Joshua would not willingly admit of any excuse by way of palliating a bad performance. Once, on my shewing a landscape to him, painted by a friend of mine, an amateur in

* Mem. page 242.

the art, he said it was very badly done, and asked me if I did not think the same. When I endeavoured to make some apology for my friend, by saying he had not had the advantage of instruction, he answered rather quickly, "What signifies that? In this manner you may excuse any thing, however bad it may be."

In one of his manuscripts, speaking of Michael Angelo, he says, "For such a superior genius, while wrapt in wonder and amazement at his own ideas, to be surly, even to his superiors, is excuseable; but for such as degrade human nature, and transform them in their representations into monkeys, to imitate this peevishness, and give themselves such airs, is the very excess of the ridiculous."

He observes "that any miserable artist who had failed in his profession as a painter, from want of ability, and had afterwards, from necessity, turned picture dealer, was always considered, by pretended connoisseurs, as well as by a great part of the world, as a much better judge of the art than the most successful artist."

He again remarks, that "it is very possible for a whole nation to have a peculiarity of manners which shall be condemned by their neighbours, so that what is politeness in one country shall be deemed foppery in another. Sir Godfrey Kneller and Sir Peter Lely, who were mannerists, and admired in England, are despised in France and Italy; but Vandyke's pictures, which are truth itself, and the result of a close attention to nature, are admired by the whole world."

I once observed to Sir Joshua,* that a certain insignificant

* Mem. page 243.

person of our acquaintance had frequent assemblies at his house, which were attended by persons of the very highest rank, and that it was surprizing how he could induce them to come to him; when Sir Joshua, who knew the world much better than I ever shall, set me right by saying, "If you will but provide suitable entertainment for them, you may easily have for your visitors whoever you chuse to invite, from the highest to the lowest."

When the much praised tragedy of Braganza was brought out on the stage at Drury Lane Theatre, Sir Joshua went to the first representation, and sat in the orchestra, a place he always preferred on account of his difficulty of hearing; he was accompanied by Mr. Garrick. The performance of Mrs. Yates, as Duchess of Braganza, gave universal satisfaction, and was received with the greatest applause. I heard Sir Joshua say, that when he turned to see how Garrick felt on the occasion he perceived his eyes suffused in tears.

Mr. Edmund Burke had great objection to that scene in the tragedy, in which poison is intended to be given infused in the holy wafer, he seemed to conceive it to be a new invention, saying such dreadful modes of wickedness ought not to have been divulged to the world. But surely Mr. Burke must have known that it had been practised before the drama of Braganza was ever thought of, and that it has been also recorded in history.

I have already given many extracts from Reynolds' MSS.,* and I have since discovered the following:—

"It is not to be supposed that those works which have

* Mem. page 243.

stood the test of the wisest and severest ages have in reality nothing of intrinsic value, but owe the long possessing of fame to a hit of fortune, to the humour or tame obsequiousness of a long succession of admirers. Such an opinion is too bold an attempt upon the reason of mankind, and he that holds it must either be possessed of divine wisdom, or be much of a fool. By invincible arguments to demonstrate the mistakes of the learned world in all its errors which have continued for ages, requires a soul of divine perspicuity, (Newton's was such,) clear from those incumbrances that have misguided and obscured the perceptions of other mortals. To oppose a single capricious opinion to the collected force of long established authority, looks like some hero in a play, or the knight errant in a romance, who with his two arms alone routs whole thousands."

"Raffaelle did not think that pictures ought to be considered as merely ornamental furniture. If that alone had been the intent and end of painting, how many painters would be his superiors! He intended to move the passions, to inspire the spectators with the love of virtue and of noble actions; consequently his pictures are not to be slightly passed over, but must be dwelt upon; and the longer this is done, the deeper the impression will be made.

"When a grace is said to be catched beyond, or contrary to the rules of art, it is never a truth; for it may be contrary to one rule, but subservient to another more comprehensive. For instance, Raffaelle, in the figure of Christ in the Transfiguration, has made such lines as are contrary to the general rules; but they are agreeable to a more extensive rule; that of being natural, simple, unaffected, and of more energy. It

breaks, indeed, through one rule to approach nearer to another of greater consequence.

" It is possible we should have seen greater variety of thoughts, and more extraordinary conceptions in the works of painters, if they were left to themselves, and did not follow each other like sheep.

" Too much attention to other men's thoughts, by filling the mind, extinguishes the natural power, like too much fuel on fire.

" The human mind cannot at once recollect all the rules of art, or if it could, would still not know how to apply them without practice; it must be by repeated acts that the habit is settled of doing right without reflecting on rules.

" A painter, who vaunted himself upon the great learning and knowledge he had in his profession, produced a picture which he boasted was painted according to the severity of the rules of his art. The connoisseurs flocked to see it; and when, contrary to his expectations, they remained silent, he is astonished at people's blindness and want of taste, pities their ignorance, and complains how little merit is regarded in those days. " I do not wonder at all," says a friend to whom he had made his moan, " at the ill success of your piece, in which you boast to have followed the rigour of the rules of art; when you have neglected the first and most essential of them, which is to have feeling or genius for the art.

" When a poet would represent a man inflamed by passion, to put a simile in his mouth he knows would be contrary to the rules of poetry, because it would be unnatural. But, suppose the poet truly felt the passion he would represent at the time he was writing upon it, (which most certainly Shake-

speare did,) he would never look about for a simile, it would inevitably cause the passion to languish. Thus we see that rules are founded on nature, consequently a poet who felt his subject properly would have very little occasion for rules.

" Homer's Iliad was first written, then Aristotle drew his rules of an epic poem.

" Genius begins where rules end. When a painter is master of every rule that is already found out, let one rule more be added; that is, not to be confined by any, but to think for himself." *Hippocrates' Advice.*

" Squareness has grandeur; it gives firmness to the forms: a serpentine line, in comparison, appears feeble and tottering.

" A firm walk or step is grand. A light step may be genteel.

" A strait avenue is grand; a serpentine line elegant.

" One class alone cannot possess all excellencies.

" Fashion sometimes adopts one, sometimes the other.

" Perfection partakes equally of all.

" In passing our judgment, we are to consider the class to which the subject belongs.

" In all these cases, as you approach the one kind of excellence you retreat from the other; you cannot join the two together without weakening the effect of each.

" The great delight of mankind is to strike with surprize.

" All games of recreation are an imitation of enmity.

" Portraits, as well as written characters of men, should be decidedly marked, otherwise they will be insipid.

" The younger pupils are best taught by those who are in a small degree advanced in knowledge above themselves, and from that cause proceeds the peculiar advantage of studying in academies.

" There are some landscape painters, who the more they work on their trees, render them the less like the objects of their imitation.

" Real greatness is that which presents less by far to the sense than to the imagination.

" Greatness causes admiration, oftentimes astonishment.

" There is a certain majesty in simplicity, which is far above all the quaintess of wit." *Pope.*

" A certain degree of pride, enough to take off any timourousness, and enable him to depend on the force of his own genius, is a necessary qualification in a painter.*

" True sublimity consists more in the natural and simple than in the pompous and swelling.

" The very foundation of the art of painting is invention; and he who most excels in that high quality must be allowed to be the greatest painter, in what degree soever he may be surpassed by others in the more inferior branches of the art.

" The painter who knows his profession from principles may apply them alike to any branch of the art, and succeed in it.

" Every painter has some favourite branch of the art which he looks for in a picture; and in proportion as that part is well or ill executed, he pronounces his opinion upon the whole. One artist looks for colouring, another for drawing, another for handling; an independent spectator looks for expression.

" Never give the least touch with your pencil till you have present in your mind a perfect idea of your future work.

---

* Our own opinion that we shall succeed, is that often which gives us success in the most difficult undertakings.

" Paint at the greatest distance possible from your sitter, and place the picture near to the sitter, or sometimes under him, so as to see both together.

" In beautiful faces keep the whole circumference about the eye in a mezzotinto, as seen in the works of Guido and the best of Carlo Marratti.*

" Look at the object from which you are painting with your eye-lids half closed, which gives breadth to the object, and subdues all the little unimportant parts.

" The difference between the Roman and the Venetian manner of painting their draperies is, that the former has always broad lights; the latter only catches of light, and consequently more natural, more silky, but not so noble.

" It surprises the ignorant in art when they hear it said, that such drapery in a picture as seems to them not to be an exact imitation of individual nature, is yet better than that which is so natural, that (to use their own words,) it looks as if you could take it up. I would ask such persons, whether in an heroic poem (to that style in painting I allude,) they look upon those expressions which are the most familiar to be the best? Expressions, however proper of themselves, yet, by being too often in the mouths of the vulgar, contract a meanness. It is the same in respect to the accompaniments in a picture; therefore the painter carefully avoids introducing into his pictures those utensils which are familiar, and seen by us every day, even so to drapery: or when forced to adopt them, then they are drawn after a form of his own composing,

* An expression of modesty softens the eye, and improves the beauty of the face while it discovers that of the mind.

or else taken from antique models. He therefore objects to such drapery as would be called natural; he seeks only the order of the folds, that they are large, and of a noble cast; that they mark out the parts they cover, and flow sweetly into each other, and conduct the eye with satisfaction from one fold to another, without offensive crossings or affected contrasts.

"The painter, as well as the poet, founds his work on general nature: but in the style of Watteau, Lancret, &c., on the contrary, the more natural the drapery is represented the better it is.

"Raffaelle and Rembrandt both imitated nature; with this difference, that the first showed what she had that was most beautiful, noble, and simple: the other took her without selection, and without exactness. It is true we see nature in his figures, but we are sorry to say it is nature.

"It is necessary that a painter should have an elevated and sublime comprehension of things; which is to be acquired by being intimately acquainted with the noblest characters of the ancients.

"There is a bombast in painting as well as in poetry, and it is divided from the true sublime by a thin partition. Hence it often happens that when the painter thinks he has given his figure the air of a hero, or the poet made him, as he conceives, speak like one, they are no more the true representations of either, than Ancient Pistol, or the player, who, in order to act the great hero, endeavoured to look as big as he could, and strutted about the stage till he was hissed off by his judicious audience.

" Some painters imagine the sublime to consist in over-strained and forced attitudes; thus quitting as much as possible every easy and natural air and action.

" Others, on the contrary, by imitating nature too closely, and without choice, have made their figures appear mean and inelegant. The first manner is the most prevalent, and indeed by much the easiest attained; as the other extreme requires some attention to nature.

" Those pompous airs, however, are more imposing, and make a greater show, and strike the eye of a raw and ignorant beholder far more than the simple natural manner.

" The same principle is applicable also to colouring; as colours, raw and gaudy, give most delight to the eye of the vulgar.

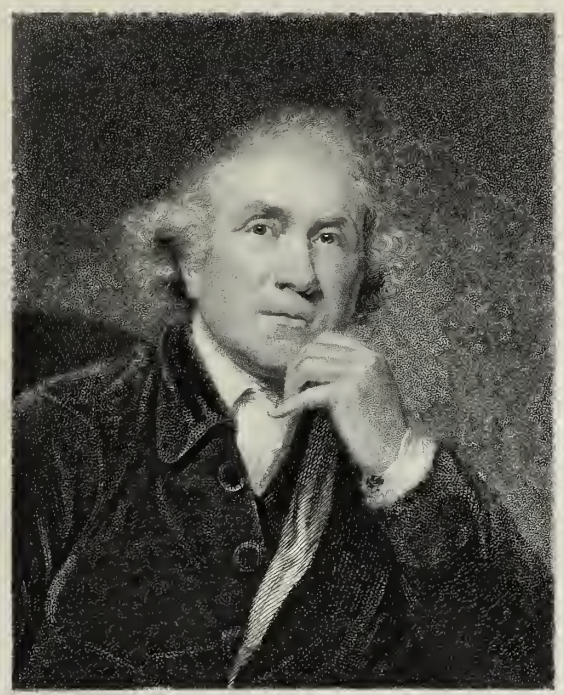
" In painting, as in architecture, the very essence and perfection of the grand style is simplicity; not to be too much encumbered with little ornaments, which produce no effect at a distance, but only make a confused heap of littlenesses.

" On the contrary, a picture should be composed of few and large parts, which fill the eye distinctly.

" Large parts and few are the foundation of a grand gusto.

" A simplicity of taste may descend into clownishness and poverty of invention; so also a richness and redundancy of invention may run into wildness, a romantic kind of richness and magnificence, like the descriptions to be met with only in romances: the consequence of which is, that you behold them without the least emotion.

" Œconomy and frugality have a relationship to taste, in not being too prodigal of rich ornaments or gay draperies.



Painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds, P.R.A. Engraved by T. Wright.

JOHN HUNTER, F.R.S.

" Endeavour to look at the subject or sitter from which you are painting as if it was a picture; this will in some degree render it more easy to be copied.

" In painting consider the object before you, whatever it may be, as more made out by light and shadow than by its lines.

" When a painter becomes fond of talking, he had better put a padlock on his mouth, because those who can be admired for what they say will have less desire to be admired for what they can do; and as the former is so much easier performed with applause than the latter, it will more frequently be adopted: it being the nature of mankind to get as much commendation as they can acquire, and by the easiest means."

Of talkers he adds, " They read, study, and look at pictures, with no other view than that of qualifying themselves for talking on the subject; their knowledge goes no further: so that an ingenious man may sometimes by chance hear a profitable sentence from them, though it really is of no kind of service to themselves. They are like the bird that brings home meat in her beak for her young, but never tastes it herself.

" Those talkers foolishly think, that if they have acquired a reputation by their tongue, it is sufficient for them; so do not care to struggle with the laborious part, that of endeavouring to practise what they so fluently deliver.

" A student should begin his career by a careful finishing, and making out the parts; as practice will give him freedom and facility of hand: a bold and unfinished manner is commonly the habit of old age."

The following are some of his observations on drawing:

"Take care to give your figure a sweep or sway.

"Outlines in waves, soft, and almost imperceptible against the back ground.

"Never make the contour too coarse.

"Avoid also those outlines and lines which are equal, which make parallels, triangles, &c.

"The parts that are nearest to our eye appear more enlightened, deeper shadowed, and better seen.

"Keep broad lights and shadows, and also principal lights and shadows.

"Where there is the deepest shadow it is accompanied by the brightest light.

"Let nothing start out, or be too strong for its place."

ON PAINTING A HEAD.

"Let those parts which turn or retire from our eye be of broken or mixed colours, as being less distinguished and nearer the borders.

"Let all your shadows be of one colour; glaze them till they are so.

"Use red colours in the shadows of the most delicate complexions, but with discretion.

"Contrive to have a skreen with red or yellow colour on it, to reflect the light on the shaded part of the sitter's face.

"Avoid the chalk, the brick-dust, and the charcoal, and think on a pearl and a ripe peach.

"Avoid long continued lines in the eyes, and too many sharp ones."

Notwithstanding that Reynolds, in the course of a long life, had judged it prudent, for his own use and reference, to

make so many memorandums of his floating ideas on the subject of his profession, yet it was impossible for any man to have thought upon the arduous labours of that profession with more modesty.* Indeed, when Lord Monboddo, once discoursing with him, said, that he thought the profession of painting must require great exertion of mind and arduous study, Sir Joshua, with his accustomed modesty, answered, "that he did not think it deserved the name of study, as it was no more than that degree of employment for the mind which fully occupies it without fatigue: and probably, for this reason, was more conducive to the happiness of the individual, than the practice of any other profession."

I think that, when Sir Joshua made this answer, he did not recollect the various knowledge and great invention which is required by those who have made the ample field of historical painting their study and pursuit. It was rather the speech of a mere portrait painter; for, at other times, I have heard him confess the great difficulty it was to him to paint history, from the want of practice in that department; which, to execute in its utmost perfection, requires more knowledge than has ever been possessed by any one man.

It was his opinion, that the population of London was no more than just sufficient to afford a reputable maintenance for eight painters only, and this number to include all the different branches of the art. What would he now say when more than eight hundred come forward and claim a maintenance, and their number every is day increasing?

Another, and perhaps a more interesting anecdote, I recollect† of a young artist of the name of Powell, who was much em-

* Mem. page 259. † Mem. page 262.

ployed in copying Sir Joshua's pictures in a small size, in oil colours, and which he executed with much accuracy and taste. Amongst others, he copied the great picture of the Marlborough family, now at Blenheim castle, which Sir Joshua had just finished; and when Powell produced the copy for his inspection, he surprized him by finding much fault with the effect of the back ground, although it was an exact imitation of the original picture. Powell, fatigued by the labour he had already bestowed, protested he could make it no better, but Sir Joshua quieted his alarm, by assuring him, it was with his own original that he was offended, not with the copy: and accordingly altered it afterwards upon mature reflection.

This circumstance shews his openness to conviction, and his readiness to correct whatever he found amiss in his own works.

That Reynolds was as willing to give advice to others, as to profit from the humblest hints, is evident from his conduct towards Mr. Pocock,* the present eminent marine painter, who, in 1780, sent his first attempt in oil colours, to him, at the same time desiring to have his candid opinion upon the picture, and, if he thought proper, that it might be exhibited at the Royal Academy exhibition. To this he received the following answer.

To N. Pocock Esq.

Leicester Fields, May 4th, 1780.

"DEAR SIR,

"Your picture came too late for the exhibition. It is much beyond what I expected from a first essay in oil colours: all the parts separately are extremely well painted; but there

* Mem. page 266.

wants a harmony in the whole together; there is no union between the clouds, the sea, and the sails. Though the sea appears sometimes as green as you have painted it, yet it is a choice very unfavourable to the art; it seems to me absolutely necessary in order to produce harmony, and that the picture should appear to be painted, as the phrase is, from one palette, that those three great objects of ship-painting should be very much of the same colour as was the practice of Vandevelde, and he seems to be driven to this conduct by necessity. Whatever colour predominates in a picture, that colour must be introduced in other parts; but no green colour, such as you have given to the sea, can make a part of a sky. I believe the truth is, that, however the sea may appear green, when you are looking down on it, and it is very near—at such a distance as your ships are supposed to be, it assumes the colour of the sky.

"I would recommend to you, above all things, to paint from nature instead of drawing; to carry your palette and pencils to the water side. This was the practice of Vernet, whom I knew at Rome; he then shewed me his studies in colours, which struck me very much, for that truth which those works only have which are produced while the impression is warm from nature: at that time he was a perfect master of the character of water, if I may use the expression, he is now reduced to a mere mannerist, and no longer to be recommended for imitation, except you would imitate him by uniting landscape to ship-painting, which certainly makes a more pleasing composition than either alone.

"I am, with great respect,
"Your most humble and obedient servant,
"Joshua Reynolds."

This letter contains much excellent advice as well as observation; but why Sir Joshua should say of the harmony of Vandevelde, that he seems to be driven to this conduct from necessity in any instance, is to me inexplicable; or, as if there could be any other reason than that of a nice observation of nature. Vandevelde was an exquisite imitator of nature, and therefore his pictures have harmony. To say that nature is out of harmony, is a contradiction in terms, and of course nonsense. If at any time we imagine that we see nature out of harmony, we may rest assured that the defect is in ourselves, and not in nature; and in respect to Vandevelde, it is my opinion, that, as a colourist, for his truth to nature, and harmony of effect, he has never been surpassed by the professors of any department in art.

I have mentioned an anecdote of the late Lord Ashburton,* to which I may add, that† at another time Dunning, in con-

---

* Mem. page 268.

† As the Literary Club has been often noticed in the Memoirs, I shall give extracts from two letters, written in this year, as they convey a clear idea of the peculiar splendour of the Society at the period.

"Mr. Jones (afterwards Sir William) to the Bishop of St. Asaph.

"MY LORD, November 23d. 1780.

"Had I not been prevented, by particular business, from writing to your lordship on Tuesday evening and yesterday, I would have informed you before, that we had done ourselves the honor (and a very great one we shall ever esteem it) of electing your lordship a member of our Club. The election was, of course, unanimous, and it was carried with the sincere approbation and eagerness of all present. I am sorry to add, that Lord Camden and the Bishop of Chester were rejected. When bishops and chancellors honor us with offering to dine with us at a tavern, it seems very extraordinary, that we should ever reject such an offer: but there is no reasoning on the caprice of men. Of our Club, I will only say, that there is no branch of human knowledge, on which some of our members are not capable

versation with Sir Joshua, mentioned to him, on seeing Lord Mansfield's portrait in the gallery, the high estimation in which he held that nobleman's great abilities; saying, that during all the early part of his own studies, he made it a matter of the first consequence always to attend at the courts of law, where Lord Mansfield was to speak, and with the same eagerness, he added, "as you, Sir Joshua, would desire and delight to see the finest picture by Titian or by Raffaelle."

Lord Mansfield sat to Sir Joshua for that excellent portrait which has since been engraved by Bartolozzi. In the progress of painting this picture, Sir Joshua one day asked him his opinion of it, and if he thought it was a likeness. When his lordship replied, that it was totally out of his power to judge of its degree of resemblance, as he had not seen his own face in any looking-glass, during the last thirty years of his life; for his

---

of giving information, and, I trust, that, as the honour will be our's, so your lordship will receive some pleasure from the company once a fortnight, of some of our first writers and critics, as well as our most virtuous senators and accomplished men. I think myself highly honoured in having been a member of this society near ten years, and chiefly, in having contributed to add such names to the number of our friends, as those of your lordship and Lord Althorpe.

"The Bishop of St. Asaph to Mr. (afterwards Sir William) Jones.

"DEAR SIR, November 27th.

"You was prevented by Sir Joshua Reynolds in your kind intentions of giving me the earliest notice of the honour you have done me. I believe Mr. Fox will allow me to say, that the honour of being elected into the Turk's Head Club is not inferior to that of being the representative of Westminster or Surrey. The electors are certainly more disinterested, and I should say, they are much better judges of merit, if they had not rejected Lord Camden and chosen me.

I flatter myself with the hopes of great pleasure and improvement in such society as you describe, which is the only club of which I ever wished myself a member.

servant always dressed him and put on his wig, which therefore rendered it quite unnecessary for him to look at himself in a mirror.

Count D'Adhemar, some time ambassador from the former court of France, when in England, had two portraits at his house in London—one of the late unfortunate Queen of France, and the other of her favorite lady, Madame de Polignac; these were by the hand of Madame Le Brun, the most esteemed artist of France for portraits.

When D'Adhemar left England, his house was publicly shown at the sale of his furniture: the nobility flocked to see those two portraits; and it became the fashion to admire them, and to speak of them with the utmost extravagance of praise. But an eminent English painter, of the time, who did not coincide with the popular opinion, has thus ludicrously described the excellencies of Madame Le Brun's merits:—

> "Where burnish'd beads, silk satin, laces, vie,
> In leaden lustre with the gooseberry eye;
> Where broad cloth breathes, to talk where cushions strive,
> And all, but Sir, or Madam, looks alive!"

These portraits Sir Joshua also went to see, and soon after, when I paid him a visit, I found him with Mr. Merry, the poet, discoursing upon the merits of those very pictures. As I had not conceived that it was worth any painter's trouble to go to see them, I had not gone, but was glad when I found that he had seen them, that I might have the opinion of so great a judge.

I said "Pray what do you think of them Sir Joshua?"

"That they are very fine," he answered.

"How fine?" I said.

"As fine as those of any painter," was his answer.

"As fine as those of any painter, do you say? do you mean living or dead?"—

When he answered me rather briskly, "Either living or dead."

I then, in great surprize, exclaimed, "Good G—! what as fine as Vandyke?"

He answered tartly, "Yes, and finer."

I said no more, perceiving he was displeased at my questioning him.

I mention the above circumstance to show his disinclination to oppose the popular opinion, or to say any thing against the interest of a cotemporary artist: as it was not his intention to mislead me, but only to put a stop to my enquiries.

There are, in succession, meteors of fashion which we see suddenly rise and as suddenly fall; with respect to these, it is but policy that established professors should be silent, or, if obliged to speak, that what they say, should be only an echo of the public voice. To stem the torrent of applause is impossible—to give even a candid opinion would be to incur the charge of envy, and therefore it would not be received as truth. The world must be left to find out its own errors; and when this happens, which always soon follows extravagant and improper praise, the object of former public admiration is frequently not only denied even its just claims, but cruelly attacked with all the rage of disappointment, and condemned never to raise its head again.

Much, however, of what an artist says, on such a subject, might perhaps better be distinguished by the manner than by the matter. It cannot be supposed, that a liberal mind

would be the pander to ignorance or prejudice. The wise then will understand; and fools cannot be led further astray.

On subjects where Sir Joshua was not afraid of being misunderstood, his manner was always to speak his sentiments plainly; and I recollect that, soon after my return from Italy, I described to Sir Joshua one of the pictures by Raffaelle, in the Vatican, which, in respect to its bold and accomplished expression, appeared to me to be the finest I had ever seen. It is that of the miracle of Bolzena, in which we find pure nature, unparalleled simplicity, and decided expression. The subject represents a miracle, said to have happened either at Orvieto or Bolzena to a priest, who being incredulous of the doctrine of transubstantiation, saw the Host miraculously dissolved into blood, before his eyes, as he celebrated mass.

In the countenance of the priest, Raffaelle has placed the whole power of his art, and his whole dependance for the explanation of the subject: as the sceptic seems not to have moved or altered his position on the sight of the miracle, but remains just in the same state as he would have done if nothing extraordinary had happened; and this appears the most natural manner for him to act in, as the best means to conceal, from the surrounding spectators, the heinousness of his former infidelity, which had occasioned this miracle to bring him to a sense of his wickedness: an inferior artist would undoubtedly have thrown him into some violent and obvious action of astonishment, that the vulgar would have understood and admired; but Raffaelle has depended solely on the character and expression in the face.—The priest is still on his knees, with the napkin which contained the sacred Host, in his hand, when, unfolding it, he discovers the wafer dissolved into

a cross of blood. This figure, although young and handsome in person, yet, in point of character, has the countenance of a bad man, or a scoundrel, and his face, red with shame and confusion, clearly shews the fright and inward conviction so strange and awful an appearance had occasioned in his mind.

When I had finished describing this picture to Sir Joshua, and expressed the delight it gave me, I was surprised to hear him say, that it was only my own imagination that had made it out so distinctly ; as it could not possibly be expressed so evidently as I had conceived it to be.

There are several prints of the picture, although very indifferent ones ; however, by referring to them, it may still be seen whether I have been just in my description of it or not.

Sir Joshua's backwardness at yielding faith to any flight of enthusiasm on the subject of this picture, ought not to be considered as arising from an unwillingness to do critical justice to the merits of Raffaelle, but from a kind of caprice at the moment: neither could he always preserve his own works from the attacks of caprice, envy, or ignorance.

With respect to his so justly admired Nativity, at New College chapel, Oxford,* a weak critic, at the time, pointed out, what he conceived to be an error of Sir Joshua, in his treatment of the subject as follows :—

" He tells us (alluding to Sir Joshua's remarks, in his journey to Flanders and Holland) that, except in ludicrous subjects, none of the personages of the picture ought to be represented as looking out of it—his Nativity, therefore, ac-

* Mem. page 274.

cording to this rule, is a ludicrous subject, as Joseph is looking at the spectator, and pointing to the infant."

This critic does not seem to understand the strict propriety of this action. Joseph is not to point out the holy child to those persons represented in the picture, who are supposed to come prepared to adore it. He looks *out* of the picture on the world, and directs them to behold their redeemer.

Thus we see, that the finest inventions may be thrown away when addressed to a vulgar mind.

He has been reprehended, by the critics, for having acted contrary to his own rules, laid down in his discourses, by introducing silk and velvet in his solemn historical picture of the death of Cardinal Beaufort; as he condemns the specification of individual stuffs in grand history: but surely he was perfectly justifiable in the introduction of silk and velvet in that picture, the subject of which may be considered as modern; and, as we are well assured that such draperies were then in use, and therefore required. Evidently he means to object to the practice of some of the best Flemish painters, who, representing the ascension of the Virgin into Heaven, surprize us when we behold her in a robe of white satin; or that of some of the French painters, who have clothed God the Father in a changeable silk.

Much severe criticism was thrown out against his large picture of the scene in the tragedy of Macbeth; but my own opinion of this piece is, that the visionary and awful effect produced, both in the conception and execution of the back ground of this picture, is certainly without a parallel in the world—its novelty and its excellence bid defiance to all

future attempts at rivalry. Had the figure of Macbeth been but equal in its requisite to this appalling scene, the picture would have stood without a companion on earth.

It recals to my memory a picture by Titian, in a church at Venice, although the subject is very dissimilar; yet, like that of Macbeth in its effect, it represents the martyrdom of St. Lawrence by torch-light: but, as that picture was in a bad condition when I saw it, it was difficult to descry its highest degree of excellence.

I have also related in the Memoirs, the great objections which were stated to Sir Joshua, on account of the demon which he has introduced at the pillow of the dying Cardinal Beaufort.

My own humble criticism on this picture is, that Sir Joshua has not erred in introducing this demon, which I approve of, but in his execution of his intention; for, had he given this fiend a visionary, mysterious, and awful appearance, no one would or could have questioned its usefulness in the composition: but, on the contrary, he has made the figure too palpable and material, and much too vulgar and mean in the idea of its form. Nay, its distinctness is such, that, had it not been rendered unfit and improbable, from its hideousness, it might have passed or been mistaken for an attendant page or dwarf, instead of a terrible and supernatural agent.

I have mentioned* a work written by Miss Reynolds, and submitted to Dr. Johnson, for his opinion respecting its publication; and it may not be uninteresting if a few specimens of it are here inserted.

---

* Mem. page 279.

" A fine tragedy, in the reading, is like a fine drawing by a great master; but when exhibited on the stage, seems as if it had been coloured by a vulgar hand to make it appear natural.

" A man, subject to anger, is, beyond all comparison, to be preferred to him who is never angry.

" The fine arts comprehend all that is excellent in the moral system, and, at the same time, open every path that tends to the corruption of moral excellence.

" Without the liberal arts the human powers rest below their proper line of cultivation; with them, they transgress too far beyond it.

" The fine arts are the proper amusements of the virtuous, but probably were never brought to any great degree of excellence by the virtuous, unless the actuating motive was necessity.

" The love of fame, of wealth, and of power, are, in general, the grand incentives to the practice of the fine arts, and at the same time the greatest impediments to their improvement.

" The liberal arts, perhaps, never arrive at any great degree of excellence in any nation, in which the influence of wealth and luxury have previously prevailed; for their fundamental principles are the *virtues*.

" The fine arts (particularly painting) are as mirrors reflecting the charms of nature, which few are capable of seeing in nature herself.

" Bashfulness denotes strong sensibility, and seems to waver betwixt pride and humility.

" Dress is the strong indication of the moral character.

" Benefits strengthen the ties of virtuous friendship; but

where there is a deficiency of virtue, generally have a contrary effect.

" A family, reared in indigence, is often rich in reciprocal affections; but affluence gives to hirelings those tender offices which endear parents, children, brothers, and sisters to each other.

" To lead the fashion indicates little merit, not to follow it still less.

" Love probably never exists without admiration. Bruyere observes, that none pass from friendship to love; probably because a thorough acquaintance, which fixes friendship, extinguishes admiration.

" Patience originates either from philosophy or from religion; and therefore may be said to be the offspring of pride or of humility.

" True politeness cannot be the concomitant of a weak or a vicious mind.

" The love of praise, in a female breast, should never transcend the domestic sphere; perhaps the most perfect feminine mind habitually aims at nothing higher than an exemption from blame.

" There is always something respectable in the object that excites the strongest ridicule, otherwise it would want the contrast which makes it ridiculous."

As we are speaking of Miss Frances Reynolds, it brings to my recollection her once mentioning an intimate friend of hers, a lady of great virtue, integrity, and prudence, although but of a common degree of intellect, when she said " I do not consider Mrs. —— as a person of much power of mind, yet, in

any difficulty, if I ask her advice that which she gives is always sure to be right, although she cannot give the reason."*

The reason seems to be, that this lady always acted from the accumulated experience of the world, which, with her, became a rule of conduct like instinct; but she never ventured to act much from her own suggestions, because she apprehended her own weakness.

On the contrary, it too often happens, that when we ask advice of a genius, his fertile imagination is his own director, and his mind suggests a thousand brilliant ideas, totally new, but which never having had their effects proved by trial, may very probably lead to difficulties if adopted. Those who follow the beaten path of the world are therefore more likely to go safely through it than those who are led into a new road by the greatest genius.

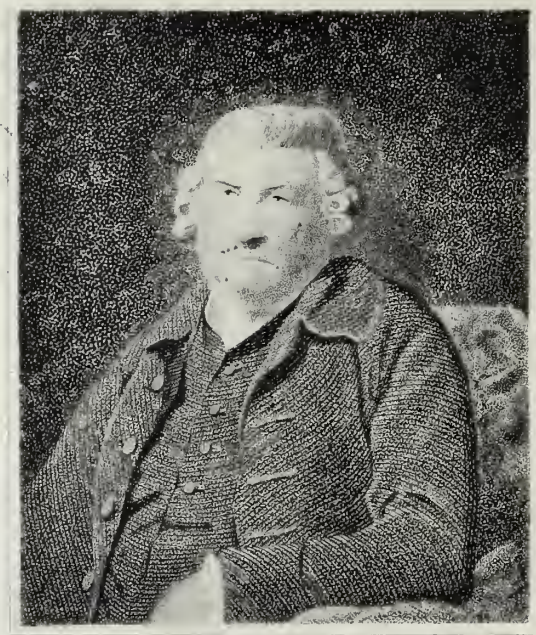
The fate of genius is uncertain; like gaming, it may lead to riches and honor, and it may lead to poverty and wretchedness.

I remember a speech of the Rev. Lawrence Sterne, when he was informed that a friend of his, a man of great capacity, had married his maid-servant: "Ah!" said he, "I always thought my friend, Mr. —— was a man of genius, as none but a genius would have done so."

I have not been able to procure any further information respecting Reynolds' pictorial tour,† but I cannot omit some

* Miss Frances Reynolds, sister to Sir Joshua, died at her house, in Queen's-square, St. James's Park, at the advanced age of eighty years, on the first of November, 1807.

† Mem. page 284.



Dr J. Reynolds pinx. H. Is. Cook. sculp.

THE REVD THOMAS WARTON.

good observations, written in a fragment of an intended dedication to the friend who was his companion in the journey to Flanders and Holland.

" The pleasure," he says, " that a mere dilletanti derives from seing the works of art, ceases when he has received the full effect of each performance ; but the painter has the means of amusing himself much longer, by investigating the principles on which the artist wrought.

———" Nor is it an inconsiderable advantage to see such works in company with one who has a general rectitude of taste, and is not a professor of the art. We are too apt to forget that the art is not intended solely for the pleasure of professors. The opinions of others are certainly not to be neglected; since, by their means, the received rules of art may be corrected : at least a species of benefit may be obtained, which we are not likely to derive from the judgment of painters ; who, being educated in the same manner are likely to judge from the same principles, are liable to the same prejudices, and may sometimes be governed by the influence of an authority, which perhaps has no foundation in nature."

We may be permitted to sum up our opinions of Reynolds' sentiments on art, and of his mode of expressing them, by an anecdote, told me by the late Mr. Opie, that a friend of his, a clergyman, declared to him, that he once delivered one of Sir Joshua's discourses, from the pulpit, as a sermon, with no other alteration but in such words as made it applicable to morals instead of the fine arts : which is a proof of the depth of his reasoning, and of its foundation being formed on the principles of general nature.

To the foregoing observations on the subject of art, by Sir Joshua himself, I take the liberty to add some lines by the well-known Peter Pindar, and which have never before appeared in print.

ADVICE TO YOUNG PAINTERS. BY PETER PINDAR.

Study Sir Joshua's works, young men;—
Not pictures only, but his pen:
Who, when Cimmerian darkness whelm'd our isle,
Appear'd a comet in his art;—
Bid nature from the canvas start,
And with the Graces bade that canvas smile.

Could Titian from his tomb arise,
And cast on Reynolds' art his eyes,
How would he heave of jealousy the groan!
Here possibly I may mistake;
As Titian probably might take
The works of our great master for his own.

As a further proof of the high opinion which Dr. Wolcot entertained of Sir Joshua's merits, I shall give an extract from a letter of his to a friend.

"As nothing affords you a higher treat than something relative to Reynolds, be informed then of what will excite your envy.

"I lately breakfasted with him at his house in Leicester-fields. After some desultory remarks on the old masters, but not one word of the living artists (as on that subject one can never obtain his real opinion), the conversation turned on Dr. Johnson. On my asking him how the club, to which he belonged, could so patiently suffer the tyranny of this overbearing man, he replied, with a smile, that the members often hazarded sentiments merely to try his powers in contradiction.

I think I in some measure wounded the feelings of Reynolds, by observing that I had often thought that the Ramblers were Idlers, and the Idlers Ramblers, (except those papers which he (Reynolds) had contributed; and further, that Johnson too frequently acted the reverse of the gipsies:—"The gipsies," said I, "when they steal the children of gentlefolks, conceal the theft by beggarly disguises, whereas Johnson often steals common thoughts, disguising the theft by a pomp of language.

"Happening to be in company with Dr. Johnson, and observing to him that his portrait by Reynolds was not sufficiently dignified: prepared with a flat contradiction, he replied, in a kind of bull-dog growl, "No, Sir!—the pencil of Reynolds never wanted dignity nor the Graces."

"It is a lucky thing for an artist to be possessed of the favour of the fashionable world; fortune then shows no objection towards a co-operation with his labours.—Reynolds avails himself of this circumstance; and, in spite of rivals and a too great mortality of colours, stands his ground like a Hercules, and defies envy, hatred, and malice; in short, all the virulent attacks made on his performances."

It was not always, however, that Reynolds met with such liberality of criticism, particularly from rival artists; and since the publication of the Memoirs, I have understood with respect to Barry,* that when first he showed some dilatoriness in preparing for his lectures, as professor of painting, Sir Joshua made some remarks upon his conduct, to which Barry retorted with great insolence and brutality, saying, "If

* Mem. page 302.

I had no more to do in the composition of my lectures than to produce such poor flimsy stuff as your discourses, I should soon have done my work, and be prepared to read." It is said this speech was delivered with his fist clinched in a menacing posture.

Sir Joshua used to say, that as many of Barry's discoveries were new to himself, so he thought they were new to every body else.

Barry should have considered, that if it is a good thing to be wise, it is a very bad thing to think we are so.

In the life of Barry, page 257, vol. i. will be found an anonymous letter to him, containing criticisms on painting as well as on poetry, and on his works at the Adelphi. It is, in my opinion, one of the most excellent critiques I have ever met with. Barry appears not to have suspected who was the author of it: but the writer of his life says, "It seems to be, from every mark of internal evidence, the production of Burke."

My own opinion is, that it is a combination of the talents of Burke and Sir Joshua Reynolds; for there are opinions contained in it that none but a painter could have given, and which are likewise the very opinions of Sir Joshua: there are also other parts in it evidently by Burke, and which none but himself could have done. Therefore, no doubt remains in my mind as to its authors, to both of whom it does equal honour: nay, Barry himself seems to have felt very grateful for the friendly advice contained in it, and was very solicitous to discover the enlightened author, but in vain.

As this letter contains so many of the genuine opinions of Sir Joshua, together with many exquisite and useful precepts

for young artists, I cannot forego my desire to give the following extracts from it. At the same time, I have presumed to point out the different parts which have been done by each individually, according to my own firm belief: but this is only matter of opinion; others may think differently. Many parts of it appear to me to have been done in conjunction.

However, at any rate, it contains too good a lesson to be omitted in an artist's book whoever may be its author. It seems but natural that Burke should ask the assistance of Sir Joshua in the affair, as it was always his desire to do every thing in his power for Barry's advantage; and he was also convinced that Sir Joshua could afford him much serviceable advice, of which he here seems to have availed himself.

"The painter who wishes to make his pictures (what fine pictures must be) nature elevated and improved, must first of all gain a perfect knowledge of nature as it is; before he endeavours, like Lysippus, to make men as they ought to be, he must know how to render them as they are: he must acquire an accurate knowledge of all the parts of the body and countenance: to know anatomy will be of little use, unless physiology and physiognomy are joined with it, so that the artist may know what peculiar combinations and proportions of features constitute different characters, and what effect the passions and affections of the mind have upon these features. This is a science which all the theorists in the world cannot teach, and which can only be acquired by observation, practice, and attention. It is not by copying antique statues, or by giving a loose to the imagination in what are called poetical compositions, that artists will be enabled to produce works of real merit; but by laborious and accurate investigation of

nature upon the principles observed by the Greeks, first to make themselves thoroughly acquainted with the common forms of nature; and then, by selecting and combining, to form compositions according to their own elevated conceptions. This is the principle of true poetry, as well as of painting and sculpture. Homer and Shakespeare had probably never seen characters so strongly marked as those of Achilles and Lady Macbeth; at least we may safely say that few of their readers have, and yet we all feel that these characters are drawn from nature, and that if we have not seen exactly the same, we have seen models or miniatures of them. The limbs and features are those of common nature, but elevated and improved by the taste and skill of the artist. This taste may be the gift of nature, the result of perfect organization, and the skill may be acquired by habit and study; but the ground-work, the knowledge of limbs and features, must be acquired by practical attention and accurate observation. And here, Sir, that portrait-painting which you affect so much to despise, is the best school that an artist can study in, provided he studies it, as every man of genius will do, with a philosophic eye, not with a view merely to copy the face before him, but to learn the character of it, with a view to employ in more important works what is good of it, and to reject what is not. It was in this view that the great painters of the Roman and Bolognese schools collected such numbers of studies of heads from nature, which they afterwards embellished and introduced in their pictures, as occasion required. Hence that boundless variety which is observable in their works."—*(The above by Sir Joshua.) Vide his Preface to Ralph's Catalogue.*

" I do not mean to recommend to the historical painter to make his works an assemblage of caricatures, like those of Hogarth and some of our present artists; but as there is scarcely any character so insipid that a Shakespeare or a Fielding would not have been able to discover something peculiar in, so there is scarcely any countenance so vacant, but that there are some trifling features which may be of use to a skilful and ingenious artist; though it seldom or ever happens that any character of countenance is sufficiently strong and perfect to serve of itself for the hero of a poem or picture, until it has been touched and embellished by the fostering hand of the poet or the painter."—*(Sir Joshua.)*

" Portrait painting may be to the painter what the practical knowledge of the world is to the poet, provided he considers it as a school by which he is to acquire the means of perfection in his art, and not as the object of that perfection.

" It was practical knowledge of the world which gave the poetry of Homer and Shakespeare that superiority which still exists over all other works of the same kind; and it was a philosophic attention to the imitation of common nature (which portrait-painting ought to be,) that gave the Roman and Bolognese schools their superiority over the Florentine, which excelled so much in theoretic knowledge of the art."—*(Sir Joshua.)*

" I entirely agree with you, that the rage of the inhabitants of this country for having their phizzes perpetuated, whether they are worthy of it or not, is one great obstacle to the advancement of art; because it makes that branch more profitable than any other, and therefore makes many men of great talents consider it as the ultimate object of their art, instead

of the means of that object. But there is another error on the contrary side not less fatal, which is the contempt our young artists are apt to entertain for the lower detail of nature, and the forward ambition which they all have of undertaking great things before they can do little ones—of making compositions before they are acquainted sufficiently with the constituent parts."—*(Burke.)*

" We are told that many ancient artists bestowed their whole lives upon a single composition—We are not to suppose that these great artists employed so many years in chipping one block of marble, but that the greatest part of the time was employed in studying nature, particularly the vast and intricate branches of physiology and pathology, in order to enable them to execute perfectly the great works which they had conceived."—*(Sir Joshua.)*

" It is not enough to know the forms, positions, and proportions of the constituent parts of the animal machine, but we should know the nice changes that are produced in them by the various affections of the mind, as grief, agony, rage, &c.; without this we may produce splendid compositions and graceful figures, but we shall never approach that perfection to which the ancients arrived: a perfection to which I fear the very constitution of modern society is an insurmountable obstacle. Such a minister as Pericles might perhaps overcome it; but, considering the present system of education, it is scarcely possible that such a one should appear. To distinguish between what is good and what is bad falls to the lot of many, but to distinguish between what is barely good and what is truly excellent falls to the lot of few; and it very rarely happens that any of these few are kings and ministers, who are

able and willing to reward an artist for giving up his whole time to one object, which he must do if he means to make it truly excellent."—*(The above by Burke.)*

" There is another erroneous principle which seems to have crept into your book, which is extremely general in the present age, and is a principal cause of our faulty taste. This is the confounding greatness of size with greatness of manner, and imagining that extent of canvas or weight of marble can contribute to make a picture or a statue sublime. The only kind of sublimity which a painter or sculptor should aim at, is to express by certain proportions and positions of limbs and features, that strength and dignity of mind, and vigour and activity of body, which enable men to conceive and execute great actions : provided the space in which these are represented is large enough for the artist to distinguish them clearly to the eye of the spectator, at the distance from which he intends his work to be seen, it is large enough. A space which extends beyond the field of vision only serves to distract and mislead the eye, and to divide the attention. The representation of gigantic and monstrous figures has nothing of sublimity either in poetry or painting, which entirely depends upon expression. When Claudian describes a giant taking a mountain on his shoulders, with a river running down his back, there is nothing sublime in it, for there is no great expression, but merely brute strength ; but when Homer describes Achilles advancing to the walls of Troy, clad in celestial armour, like the autumnal star that brings fevers, plagues, and death, we see all the terrible qualities of that hero rendered still more terrible by being contrasted with the venerable figure of Priam standing upon the walls of Troy, and tearing his white hair at

sight of the approaching danger. This is the true sublime; *(he must mean in poetry, for it would not be very sublime in painting;)* the other is trick and quackery. Any madman can describe a giant striding from London to York, or a ghost stepping from mountain to mountain, but it requires genius, and genius experienced in the ways of men, to draw a finished character with all the excellencies and excesses, the virtues and infirmities of a great and exalted mind, so that by turns we admire the hero and sympathize with the man—exult and triumph in his valour and generosity, and shudder at his rage, and pity his distress. This is the Achilles of Homer; a character everywhere to be seen in miniature, which the poet drew from nature, and then touched and embellished according to his own exalted ideas. Had he drawn him with great virtues and great abilities, without great passions, the character would have been unnatural, and of course uninteresting; for a vigorous mind is necessarily accompanied with violent passions, as a great fire with great heat. The same principle which guided Homer should guide the painter in studying after nature. He should attempt to copy, and not to create; and when his mind is sufficiently stored with materials, and his hand sufficiently exercised in art, then let him select and combine, and try to produce something superior to common nature, though copied from it. But let him not imagine, that because he can produce great things, he can therefore produce good things, or that when he has covered a great extent of canvas with bold and hasty sketches, he has produced a fine picture, or sublime composition. Such works, compared with the beautiful and animated compositions of the Bolognese school, put me in mind of Claudian's battle of the giants, compared with Virgil's

battle of the bees. In the former all the objects are vast, but the action and expression extravagant and absurd, and the whole cold and uninteresting. In the latter the objects are minute, but the action and expression bold and animated, and the whole together, warm, clear, and spirited."—*(The above by Burke.)*

"I have seen a large cartoon, copied from a little picture of the vision of Ezekiel by Raffaelle, in which the copyist thought, without doubt, to expand and illustrate the idea of the author; but by losing the majesty of the countenances, which makes the original so sublime, notwithstanding its being in miniature, his colossal copy became ridiculous, instead of awful."—*(The above by Sir Joshua.)*

"It is with great concern I have observed of late years this taste for false sublime gaining ground in England, particularly among artists. I attribute it in a great measure to certain compositions, which have been extolled by interested prejudices, and admired by credulous ignorance, for no other reason than because they were not understood. Few readers take the trouble of judging for themselves; so that when a work is ushered into the world with great pomp, and under the sanction of great names, its real merits are examined only by a few, the generality being content to admire, because it is the fashion to admire. If the work under these circumstances be pompous and unmeaning, its success is sure, as its pomp dazzles and its vacancy puzzles, both which are admirable ingredients to procure respect. This I think is the true way to account for the applause and admiration that have been given to those miserable rhapsodies published by Macpherson under the name of Ossian. They were ushered into the world with

great pomp, as the production of an ancient bard, and recommended by the respectable authority of Dr. Blair, aided by all the national prejudice of the Scotch. Few, therefore, were willing to allow that they disliked them, and still fewer bold enough to declare their dislike openly. Hence they have been received by many as standards of true taste and sublimity, which the author modestly declared them to be. The consequence of this was the corrupting all true taste, and introducing gigantic and extravagant tinsel for easy dignity and natural sublimity. I attribute this false taste to these poems, because I see so many artists who have been working from them, all of whose works are tainted with it; and indeed it can hardly be otherwise, as the poems themselves (for so they are improperly called,) are nothing but a confused compilation of tinsel and fustian, such as any one might write who had impudence enough to publish. Fashionable authors have great influence upon the taste of a nation: Seneca and Lucan certainly corrupted that of the Romans; and Homer as certainly formed that of the Greeks. Before his time, Sidon was the country of the arts, as himself frequently mentions; but as soon as that spirit of true taste, elegance, and sublimity, which he had breathed into them, began to operate, they infinitely surpassed all other nations."—*(The above by Burke.)*

Great as was the genius of Burke, it was impossible for him to have written the foregoing criticism on the art without the powerful assistance of Reynolds; yet, notwithstanding this proof of the nice discrimination and discernment of Sir Joshua, as an instance of the fallibility of memory respecting his own works, I cannot omit relating a circumstance rather curious of his having totally forgotten one of his own performances, a full

length portrait of a lady and her young son, painted by him in the early part of his life, but after his return from Italy. This was brought to me many years after the lady's death, to make a copy from it; and in the mean time, Sir Joshua accidentally calling at my house, saw the picture, and very gravely asked me who it was painted by. I answered, "They tell me it was by yourself." He then said, rather quickly, "Why, what have you been doing to it?" I replied that I had done nothing to it. Then, looking again at the picture, he said, "Why, I do not think it is very bad." I answered, "I think it very fine, especially the head of the child;" and this was really the truth.

Sir Joshua at another time observed to me of an admired rising genius in the art, that he grew worse instead of better, and seemed to have lost himself in his careless execution of, and deficiency in finishing, his works; but added, "It is not an uncommon case with those even who strive to improve in their profession; he is, perhaps, trying experiments; and, if so, will in time come round again, probably better than ever."

I have recorded some of Reynolds' notes illustrative of Mason's Translation of Du Fresnoy;* and it may also be noticed that Sir Joshua, in another of the notes, has given with great caution the following opinion:

"The pre-eminence which Fresnoy has given to those three great painters, Raffaelle, Michael Angelo, and Julio Romano, sufficiently point out to us what ought to be the chief object of our pursuit. Though two of them were either totally ignorant

* Mem. page 506.

of, or never practised, any of those graces of the art which proceed from the management of colours, or the disposition of light and shadow; and the other (Raffaelle) was far from being eminently skilful in these particulars: yet they justly deserve that high rank in which Fresnoy has placed them; Michael Angelo, for the grandeur and sublimity of his characters, as well as for his profound knowledge of design; Raffaelle, for the judicious arrangement of materials, for grace and dignity, and the expression of his characters; and Julio Romano for possessing the true poetical genius of painting, perhaps in a higher degree than any other painter whatever.

"In heroic subjects it will not, I hope, appear too great a refinement of criticism to say, that the want of naturalness or deception of art, which give to an inferior style its whole value, is no material disadvantage: the Hours, for instance, as represented by Julio Romano, giving provender to the horses of the Sun, would not strike the imagination more forcibly from their being coloured with the pencil of Rubens, though he would have represented them more naturally: but might he not possibly, by that very act, have brought them down from the celestial state to the rank of mere terrestrial animals?"

Sir Joshua afterwards modestly adds, that, "in these things, however, I admit, there will always be a degree of uncertainty. Who knows that Julio Romano, if he had possessed the art and practice of colouring like Rubens, would not have given to it some taste of poetical grandeur not yet attained to?

"The same familiar naturalness would be equally an imperfection in characters which are to be represented as demigods, or something above humanity."

Sir Joshua further adds: "Though it would be far from an

addition to the merit of those two great painters to have made their works deceptions, yet there can be no reason why they might not in some degree, and with a judicious caution and selection, have availed themselves of many excellencies which are found in the Venetian, Flemish, and Dutch schools, and which have been inculcated in this poem. There are some of them which are not in absolute contradiction to any style; the preservation of breadth in the masses of colours; the union of these with their grounds; and the harmony arising from a due mixture of hot and cold hues, with many other excellencies not inseparably connected with that individuality which produces deception, would surely not counteract the effect of the grand style; they would only contribute to the ease of the spectator, by making the vehicle pleasing by which ideas are conveyed to the mind, which otherwise might be perplexed and bewildered with a confused assemblage of objects; they would add a certain degree of grace and sweetness to strength and grandeur. Though the merits of those two great painters are of such transcendancy as to make us overlook their deficiency, yet a subdued attention to these inferior excellencies must be added to complete the idea of perfection."

Mr. Opie in answer to this, I think very justly, observes, "Can it be supposed that the Hours leading out the Horses of the Sun, painted by Julio Romano, would have been less poetical and celestial had they possessed more harmony, brilliancy, and truth of colouring? Yet this has been supposed, and by a writer whose name I revere, and whose works will be an honour to this country as long as taste and genius continue to attract admiration. But though I respect *him* much, I respect *truth* more, which I think will bear me out in main-

taining the contrary opinion. Celestial objects, according to our conceptions of them, differ from terrestrial ones not in essence, but in beauty; not in principle, but in power; and our representations of them should possess all the splendour and effect, as well as all the vigour, spirit, and elevation of character possible. To a certain portion of spirit and character it was doubtless owing, that in *spite* of, and not by the aid of defects, Julio Romano's horses became the objects of admiration; and had this excellence been joined to the others with which they are always associated in our minds, the effect of the work must have been proportionally greater, and it would have consequently stood still higher in the scale of art.

"Such paradoxical opinions cannot be too closely examined, as they tend to arrest the progress of art, and prevent those attempts by which alone perfection must (if ever) be obtained. For what is perfection, but the complete union of all parts of the art; and if they are incompatible, what have we to hope for?"

At another time, Sir Joshua, in conversation, gave it as his opinion, that the cartoons of Raffaelle are of a colour most proper for such subjects as they mean to represent; and that, was their colour a more exact imitation of nature, it would only vulgarise and render them more familiar to us, and lessen the impressive sublimity of their effect. This, at first, seems to be very sound reasoning. But yet, I apprehend it not to be a just judgment, inasmuch as it pre-supposes, that in the absence of this natural and familiar colour its place is supplied by an unobtrusive visionary negative hue; and if such were indeed possible, the reasoning might be good: but, on the contrary, we find a colour positive and unnatural, and


WILLIAM ROBERTSON D.D.
Painted by Sr Jos.a Reynolds
Engraved by Jn.o Hall.

which obtrudes upon our minds the recollection of things still terrestrial and familiar, much more vulgar and degrading, and more destructive of the awful impression that is intended to be made, whilst the dusky hues of brick-dust and charcoal are forced upon our ideas from their similarity to the tints of the picture. Besides, we shall soon perceive, that if we raise the scene in our mind's eye, we shall have a sublime picture presented to us in a colour, still as far from that positive one of Julio Romano or Raffaelle as it might be from common familiar nature, and without any similitude to coarse terrestrial substances, so as to break the illusion, or draw off our attention from the awful idea.

Sir Joshua seems not to have reasoned so wrong on the principle as he is unlucky in the instances he has given; as it is certain that a positive bad colour, proceeding from an inability in the painter in that part of the art, ought never to be received as a model of imitation under whatever high authority it may be found.

Pope, with Dryden's translation of Du Fresnoy corrected by Jervas, sent to that indifferent painter the well-known and most exquisitely poetical letter in which are these lines:

> " Smit with the love of sister Arts we came,
> And met congenial, mingling flame with flame;
> Like friendly colours found them both unite,
> And each from each contract new strength and light.
> How oft in pleasing tasks we wear the day,
> While summer suns roll unperceiv'd away?
> How oft our slowly growing works impart,
> While images reflect from Art to Art?
> How oft review, each finding like a friend,
> Something to blame, and something to commend?"

So Mr. Mason, when he sent his translation of Du Fresnoy to his friend Sir Joshua Reynolds, thought it incumbent on himself also "to mingle flame with flame;" and thus Mr. Mason addresses the great painter:

> "Let friendship, as she caus'd, excuse the deed;
> With thee, and such as thee, she must succeed:
> But what, if fashion tempted POPE astray,
> The witch has spells, and JERVAS knew a day
> When mode-struck belles and beaux were proud to come,
> And buy of him a thousand years of bloom,
> Even then I deem it but a venal crime;
> Perish alone that selfish sordid rhyme,
> Which flatters lawless sway, or tinsel pride;
> Let black oblivion plunge it in her tide."

This species of imitation is well described in one of Æsop's fables.

Sir Joshua was exceedingly willing at all times to lend pictures, prints, or drawings, or any thing in his possession, particularly to young artists; and he has sometimes been near losing them, by their being seized for rent, or from other circumstances to which the indigence of the borrowers rendered them liable. I do not think he ever denied any one who asked; he also readily gave his advice to all those who came to seek it, and they were frequently very numerous, insomuch as to take up his time, and make him occasionally rather tart in his answers, but not often. One instance I recollect of a young artist, who frequently took his pictures to him to have the faults pointed out, as well as those parts of them in which he was successful, in order to his improvement. This artist was desired by another young painter to introduce him to Sir Joshua, that he might have the like advantage, and accordingly they went together with their productions in their

hands. The first showed his work, and received some commendations on it from Sir Joshua. When the second artist, who was considerably inferior in his practice to the first, next, with much awe and trembling, humbly displayed his performance, which was the portrait of a female, but Sir Joshua, who was very tenacious of his time, and had been too often annoyed by similar applications, hastily exclaimed to him, " What is this you have in your hand? You should not show such things. What's that upon her head, a dish-clout?" The poor forlorn artist was so confounded at this first introduction, that he went home, and was literally not able to resume his palette and pencils for more than a month afterwards.

This circumstance was related to me by the artist who was the introducer; but I believe Sir Joshua was totally unconscious of the effect it had on the young man, or he never would have spoke nin that manner.

One day when Sir Joshua called at my house, and saw the picture I was then painting, he objected to its colouring, saying I had made it too florid; I answered that Mr. —— the painter had just before been with me, and had observed of that very picture that it was not sufficiently vivid in its colour: when Sir Joshua answered rather sharply, " Look at that painter's works, and thence you may estimate the value of his advice."

With respect to Sir Joshua's appointment to be principal painter to his Majesty, already mentioned,* it may be added, that at this time, in the month of August, Sir Joshua received a letter from Dr. Johnson, who was then at Ashborne, which

* Mem. page 313.

not only shows his great attachment to Sir Joshua, but may be considered as having a reference to the above circumstance.

" Having had since our separation little to say that could please you or myself by saying, I have not been lavish of useless letters.

" Poor Ramsay! on which side soever I turn, mortality presents its formidable frown. I left three old friends at Lichfield when I was last there, and have found them all dead. I no sooner lost sight of dear Allan, than I am told I shall see him no more. That we must all die we always knew; I wish I had sooner remembered it. Do not think me intrusive or importunate if I now call, dear Sir, on you to remember it."

In another letter, dated September 2d, to Sir Joshua from Johnson, he says, " I am glad that a little favour from the court has interrupted your furious purposes. I could not in any case have approved such public violence of resentment, and should have considered any who encouraged it, as rather seeking sport for themselves than honour for you. Resentment gratifies him who intended the injury, and pains him unjustly who did not intend it. But all is now superfluous."

To what event this last letter alludes is to me unknown, but most probably it refers to Sir Joshua's becoming painter to the King. I know that Sir Joshua expected the appointment would be offered to him on the death of Ramsay, and expressed his disapprobation with regard to soliciting for it; but he was informed that it was a necessary point of etiquette, with which at last he complied, and seems to have pleased Johnson by so doing, who again wrote, dated September 18th of this year.

" I flattered myself that this week would have given me a

letter from you, but none has come. Write to me now and then, but direct to me next at Lichfield."

"I have three letters this day, all about the balloon; I could have been content with one. Do not write me about the balloon, whatever else you may think proper to say." A few days after he wrote—

"October 2. I am always proud of your approbation, and therefore was much pleased that you liked my letter. When you copied it, you invaded the Chancellor's right rather than mine. The refusal I did not expect, but I had never thought much about it, for I doubted whether the Chancellor had so much tenderness for me as to ask. He, being the keeper of the King's conscience, ought not to be supposed capable of an improper petition.—All is not gold that glitters, as we have often been told; and the adage is verified in your place * and my favour; but if what happens does not make us richer, we must bid it welcome if it makes us wiser.—I do not at present grow better, nor much worse; my hopes, however, are somewhat abated, and a very great loss is the loss of hope, but I struggle on as I can."

I trust I shall be pardoned for giving these extracts from Johnson's letters to Sir Joshua, as they throw light on the characters of both, and contain also the opinions of so considerable a judge of mankind as Dr. Johnson.

Boswell relates, that being in conversation with Sir Joshua Reynolds and Dr. Johnson, Sir Joshua said, that he took the

---

* Alluding probably to the place of King's painter which, since Burke's reforming the King's household expenses, had been reduced from 200 to 50 pounds per annum.

altitude of a man's taste by his stories and his wit, and his understanding by the remarks which he repeated, being always sure that he must be a weak man who quotes common things with an emphasis as if they were oracles :—Johnson agreed with him ; and Sir Joshua having observed that the real character of a man was found out by his amusements, Johnson added, " Yes, Sir, no man is a hypocrite in his pleasures." I might also add, that much of a man's capacity and disposition may be discovered by his manner of laughing, and the matter he laughs at, without his speaking.

It was the opinion of Dr. Johnson that the concluding lines of the Dunciad were among the finest lines of Pope, and not inferior to those of any poet that ever existed.

It was a particular pleasure to Sir Joshua when he got into his hands any damaged pictures by some eminent old masters ; and he has very frequently worked upon them with great advantage, and has often made them, both in effect and colour, vastly superior to what they had ever been in their original state. For instance, with respect to one picture by Velasquez, a full length portrait of Phillip the Fourth of Spain when a boy. I well remember when I entered his painting-room one day, and saw this picture, he said to me, " See, there is a fine picture by Velasquez." I looked at it and greatly admired it, and with much simplicity said, " Indeed it is very fine; and how exactly it is in your own manner, Sir Joshua?" yet it never entered into my mind that he had touched upon it, which was really the fact, and particularly on the face.

The picture also of a moor blowing a pipe or flute, by Velasquez, now in the possession of Samuel Whitbread, esq. I bought

for Sir Joshua at a picture sale by his desire. When he got it into his painting-room, he painted an entire new back ground to the picture, a sky instead of what was before all dark without any effect; but with this and some few other small alterations, it became one of the finest pictures I ever saw.

I have in more than one place * mentioned the high opinion of Dr. Johnson respecting his friend Sir Joshua, who in return had no less admiration of the powers and endowments of Johnson's mind: nor can it be considered otherwise than as adding dignity even to Johnson, when we find that Reynolds held him to be his master and preceptor, as may be seen by a character he left of him, written with the intention of inserting it, by way of example, in some future discourse, but which he never lived to finish.

"No man," he says, "like Johnson, had the faculty of teaching inferior minds the art of thinking: perhaps other men might have equal knowledge, but few were so communicative. His great pleasure was to talk to those who looked up to him. It was here he exhibited his wonderful powers. In mixed company, and frequently in company that *ought* to have looked up to him, many, thinking they had a character for learning to support, considered it as beneath them to enlist in the train of his auditors; and to such persons he certainly did not appear to advantage, being often impetuous and overbearing. The desire of shining in conversation was in him indeed a predominant passion; and if it must be attributed to vanity, let it at the same time be recollected, that it produced that loquaciousness from which his more intimate friends derived considerable advantage. The observations which he made on

* Mem. page 316.

poetry, on life, and on every thing about us, I applied to our art; with what success, others must judge. Perhaps an artist in his studies should pursue the same conduct; and instead of patching up a particular work on the narrow plan of imitation, rather endeavour to acquire the art and power of thinking. On this subject I have often spoken; but it cannot be too often repeated, that the general power of composition may be acquired; and when acquired, the artist may then lawfully take hints from his predecessors. In reality, indeed, it appears to me that a man must begin by the study of others. Thus Bacon became a great thinker by first entering into, and making himself master of the thoughts of other men."

It was a further remark of Sir Joshua's, that no man of modern times had so much occupied the attention of the nation after his death as Dr. Johnson. Few men, even the illustrious in their day, dwell long upon our minds after they cease to exist amongst us.

Liberal as Sir Joshua was to men of other professions, he was not wanting also to those of his own, as will appear from a very short note here introduced. I have not, indeed, scrupled to insert any original letters of Sir Joshua's, although not containing matter of much importance, but merely because such articles are very rare from him, as he greatly disliked the employment of letter-writing, even when obliged to do it on business: the following, however, contains something of advice. It was written to Mr. Charles Smith, an artist, at that time in the East Indies, where he was very successful in pourtraying some of the highest sovereigns of the East, from whom he received distinguished honours. He was the nephew of Mr. Caleb Whiteford.

"DEAR SIR, *London, Dec.* 3, 1784.

"I take this opportunity of returning you my sincere thanks for the present you was so obliging as to send me of the yellow colour, which is certainly very beautiful, and I believe will do very well in oil, though perhaps better with water.

"I hope you meet with the success you so well deserve. I am only concerned that you are so much out of the way of making that improvement which your genius would certainly have enabled you to make if you had staid in England. A painter who has no rivals, and who never sees better works than his own, is but too apt to rest satisfied, and not take what appears to be a needless trouble, of exerting himself to the utmost, pressing his genius as far as it will go.

"I saw the other day, at Mr. Bromil's, a picture of a child with a dog, which, after a pretty close examination, I thought my own painting; but it was a copy, it seems, that you made many years ago. I am, with great respect,

"Your most obedient humble servant,

"JOSHUA REYNOLDS."

At this period of his eminence, and in the year 1785, the Editor of a periodical publication came one morning to Sir Joshua while he was at breakfast. The purport of his visit was to collect particulars, in order to give some account of Sir Joshua's life in his magazine; but Reynolds being deaf, could not comprehend what it was he required: when the young lady, his niece, who was at the table, explained the business to him, by saying, "Uncle, the gentleman wants your life; he is come for your life!"

But for the execution of that friendly act of writing his life,

he looked up to Burke, to Malone, or Boswell, as the distinguished authors who were to preserve his memory in an imperishable page. Little did he think it would ever fall to my lot to record his years thus imperfectly, or that those fostered friends of his would let him pass to the grave with such scanty notice; but let no man trust to what his favourites may do for his memory when he himself is no more.

I think his chief dependance, with regard to writing his life, rested on Edmund Burke, of whom he had so high an opinion, that I have heard him say that even Dr. Johnson felt himself his inferior.

In this year he painted several very fine portraits, amongst which were those of the Duke of Orleans, who was afterwards guillotined, (this was one of his finest whole length pictures,) and a very fine picture of the Duchess of Devonshire fondling her young child. They were in the exhibition of the following year, 1786,* along with several others of his most celebrated pieces. Amongst these † the Infant Hercules.

The Infant Hercules, when it appeared at the exhibition, was placed over the chimney; it was thus the first picture which presented itself to view from the entrance of the room, and had the most splendid effect of any picture I ever saw. I well remember the remark made on it by Hodges the landscape painter, as he first noticed it in the Exhibition Room, when, from the extraordinary rich tone of colouring, warm and glowing in the extreme, he said, that "it looked as if it been boiled in brandy."

Barry also gives a very judicious account of this picture,

---

* Mem. page 329. † Mem. page 330.

which I shall insert. Although Barry cannot rank very high as a practical painter, he was still a very excellent critic on many parts of the art; and as this capital work of Sir Joshua is now gone from us into a far distant country, and totally lost to this nation, to which in future it can only be known by prints and by description, I am the more inclined to preserve this record of it.

"Nothing can exceed," he says, "the brilliancy of light, the force, and vigorous effect of his picture of the Infant Hercules strangling the serpents: it possesses all that we look for, and are accustomed to admire in Rembrandt, united to beautiful forms, and to an elevation of mind to which Rembrandt had no pretensions; the prophetical agitation of Tiresias, and Juno enveloped with clouds, hanging over the scene like a black pestilence, can never be too much admired, and are indeed truly sublime. It is very much to be regretted that this picture is in the hands of strangers, at a great distance from the lesser works of Sir Joshua, as it would communicate great value and eclat to them. What a becoming and graceful ornament would it be in one of the halls of the city of London."

Reynolds himself, on taking leave of it, previous to its departure for Russia,* said to a friend, that "there were ten pictures under it, some better, some worse." Such was his earnest desire to obtain excellence, and his modest opinion of the uncertainty in his practice.

After Sir Joshua had finished the Hercules, he painted a very fine picture, in the same style of colour, on a three-quarter canvas, of a girl sleeping, resting with her head on

* Mem. page 331.

her arm. This was one of his richest performances, and was in the exhibition of the year 1787, when Mr. Opie and myself were the managers for arranging the pictures; and we found great difficulty in placing it, being so powerful in its effect that it seemed to annihilate every other picture that was near it, and the conspicuous part of the room that was before desirable was no longer so for any picture when seen near this.

One day about this time, I dined at Sir Joshua's, in company with several other persons, one of whom was Dr. French Lawrence; it was at the time of Mr. Hastings's trial before the House of Lords; and Lawrence, who was the intimate friend and worshipper of Edmund Burke, had that morning attended the trial in Westminter-hall, where Burke had made a very long speech, with which Lawrence was enraptured; he repeated parts of it, as examples of the highest possible degree of feeling and eloquence, particularly when, describing the mode of torture that had been inflicted on the innocent and unfortunate Indians, Mr. Burke had thus expressed himself:—"Those cruel executioners had not been content with using the common and usual instruments of torture, but, with a shocking ingenuity, had sought out with difficulty those pernicious weeds which Nature had sown in her fretful moments with which to torment their body and increase their anguish."

I could not help saying that I thought this speech by far too studied and flowery to be expressive of much feeling, and that the orator seemed to be more occupied in displaying his own eloquence, than affected by the sufferings of those whose tale he told: for those who really feel are not apt to be so correct, so flowery, and so poetical; they trust only to the

energy of Nature, which is still more eloquent, and always to be distinguished from that in which the orator attempts to show himself off. This remark immediately rouzed the Doctor's anger, and he answered in a rage, "It is you who want to show yourself off." I then appealed to Sir Joshua, and asked him if he did not think the speech was studied, affected, and without feeling, and he immediately agreed with me in opinion.

The picture which Sir Joshua executed of Lord Heathfield,* in the year 1787, was of such extraordinary merit, as to have silenced instead of exciting envy; assuredly, therefore, I shall be pardoned if I give Mr. Barry's opinion of this portrait. After having bestowed high praise on the full-length portrait of Mrs. Siddons as the Tragic Muse, he thus continues:— "And it is highly probable that the picture of Lord Heathfield, the glorious defender of Gibraltar, would have been of equal importance had it been a whole length; but even as it is, only a bust, there is great animation and spirit, happily adapted to the indications of the tremendous scene around him, and to the admirable circumstance of the key of the fortress firmly grasped in his hands; than which, imagination cannot conceive any thing more ingenious and heroically characteristic."

Barry's general remarks also appear to me to be very just and instructive where he says, "Sir Joshua's object appears to have been to obtain the vigour and solidity of Titian, and the bustle and spirit of Vandyke, without the excesses of either; and in by far the greatest part of his portraits he has admirably succeeded."

---

* Mem. page 344.

Indeed this high commendation was only following an example set by Reynolds himself; and the following circumstance is an instance of it.* One evening, at the Artists' Club, held at the Turk's Head, in Gerrard-street, Sir Joshua came into the room, having just before seen a very fine landscape, painted by Gainsborough, with which he had been exceedingly struck, from its extraordinary merit. He was describing its beauties to the members of the Club then present, and finished his eulogium by saying, "Gainsborough is certainly the first landscape-painter now in Europe;" when the famous Richard Wilson, the landscape-painter, who was one of the auditors of this high commendation, and who, from an excusable jealousy, felt himself offended, after begging leave to add also to this high character given of Gainsborough, said, "Well, Sir Joshua, and it is my opinion that he is also the greatest portrait-painter at this time in Europe." Sir Joshua felt the rebuke, and immediately apologized for his inattention in making the observation in Wilson's company.

Notwithstanding this liberality towards Gainsborough,† it was a notion held by Sir Joshua, and which I have heard him declare, "That it was impossible for two painters in the same department of the art to continue long in friendship with each other." This brings to my mind a geographical paradox, as it is called by Gordon in his Grammar, where he says, "There is a certain spot on this globe on which two men cannot stand at a time without quarrelling."

I must also remark, that Sir Joshua was by no means scrupulous of openly confessing the gratification he received from whatever species of art or ingenuity came to his knowledge.

---

* Mem. page 345. † Mem. page 348.

He was a prodigious admirer of the invention and striking effect of the Panorama in Leicester-fields, and went repeatedly to see it. He was the first person who mentioned it to me, and earnestly recommended me to go also, saying it would surprise me more than any thing of the kind I had ever seen in my life ; and I confess I found it to be as he had said.

About this time, a most eminent dramatic character had composed an excellent poem, which he purposed dedicating to Sir Joshua, and accordingly called on him one morning, and read it to him. When Sir Joshua, probably conceiving that praise of his professional powers would be most gratifying to the performer, said, with much simplicity, " I can scarcely pass my judgment on the poem ; you have read it so extraordinary well, that perhaps any poetry so read would appear fine."— The author put the poem into his pocket, soon took his leave, and was not so well pleased as to dedicate his work to Sir Joshua after this species of compliment.

To compliment any man on those particular talents which the world has acknowledged he possesses, is to him but faint praise, especially when he pants for fame in another department ; as it has been observed of Cardinal Richlieu, that those who wished to gain his favour succeeded best when they pretended to be enraptured with his poetry, and said nothing of his political powers.

The mental sufferings of Sir Joshua under the failure of his sight were, perhaps, greater than he was willing to acknowledge ; and he who, during his former life, had been perpetually and earnestly employed in works destined to delight the world, and add, in part, to the immortality even of the illustrious when represented as he could represent them, being now pre-

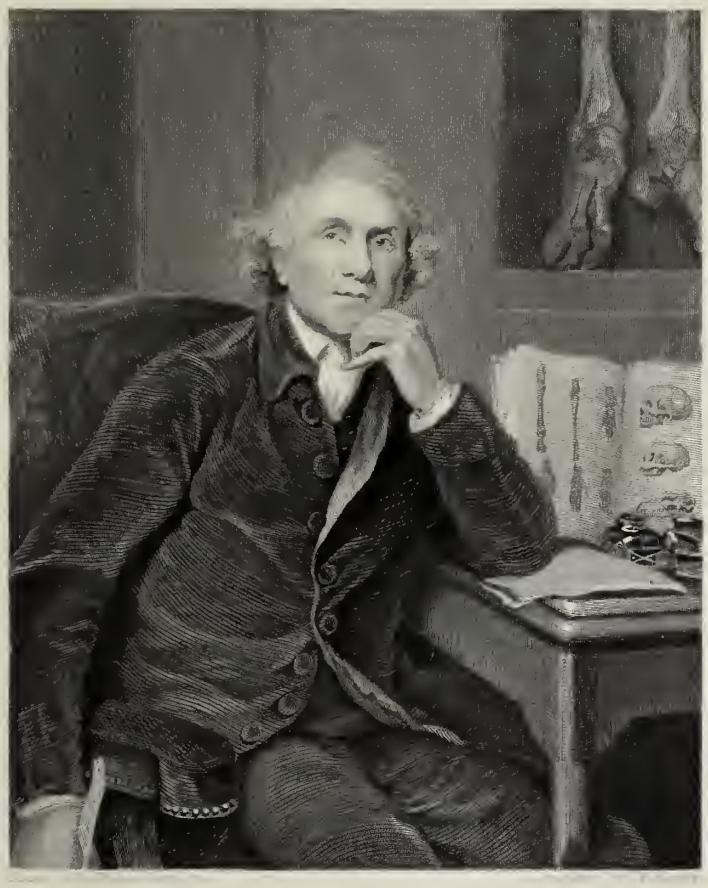
vented, by the unavoidable infirmities of human nature, from occupying himself in those studies that had raised his name so high, was reduced to fill up the tedious lingering hours, by such humble amusements, as could afford any consolation in a state to him so new.

Part of his attention was, in consequence, bestowed upon a little tame bird, which, like the favourite spider of the prisoner in the Bastille, served to pass away a lonely hour: but this proved also a fleeting pleasure; for on a summer morning, the window of the chamber being, by accident or carelessness, left open, the little favourite took his flight, and was irrecoverably lost, although its master wandered for hours in the square before the house in hopes to reclaim it, yet in vain.

His inability to pursue his profession did not, however, sour his mind against the increasing fame of his cotemporaries, as appears from his observations respecting the alarming occurrence at the delivery of his last discourse;* and such was the opinion of Sir Joshua, in respect to the progress the arts had then made in England, and as he imagined, were still making towards perfection, that, in conversation with me once, he ventured to predict, that the arts would so improve in this country, and in future years arrive to such a state of excellence, as that "all we can now achieve," he said, "will appear like children's work in comparison with what will be done."

I cannot coincide with this opinion, as far as it respects his own works, which I do not think he seemed to rate so high as they deserve. The only allusion to any merit in his own efforts that I can recollect him ever to have made, is once

* Mem. page 363.



JOHN HUNTER

John Hunter

hearing him say, "That lovers had acknowledged to him, after having seen his portraits of their mistresses, that the originals had appeared even still more lovely to them than before, by their excellencies being so distinctly pourtrayed." Yet his own opinion of his works was so humble, that I have heard him *confess his terror at seeing them exposed in the bright light of the Sun.*

Whether portrait-painting will ever be carried much further than Sir Joshua has carried it, I have my doubts; but, in respect to the arts in general, I think our countrymen fully qualified to verify the above prediction of Sir Joshua. It is my firm opinion, that had there been the same encouragement and opportunity offered to the arts in this country that has been afforded to them in Italy and France, we should have seen how British powers and talents would have burst forth, and also that laudable ambition, that activity and spirit of enterprize, that good sense and sound judgment, that originality and strength of character, which so particularly mark the people of this empire, that freedom of thinking for themselves which prevents the servile imitation of each other, so constantly found in most other countries, especially in France: when these are all considered, how much more than probable is it that we should have seen such works of excellence and variety produced as no age or country have ever seen equalled; and thus Raffaelles and Corregios have arisen to rival the Apelles and Zeuxis of the ancients, as well as a Milton and Shakespeare to vie with Homer and Euripides.

But this vain hope is never to be realized in our isles; as no great and adequate cause is likely ever to occur to give the impetus, or to spur genius on to great exertions: and without

some such powerful cause, it becomes a moral impossibility to be accomplished.

Notwithstanding the great excellence of Sir Joshua's works, many of them were rejected, and others never paid for. Once as I was passing through his gallery with him, he pointed to one of his own paintings, containing a group of portraits, in a picture which had been left upon his hands, saying, with a smile, " Pity so much good work should be thrown away for nothing!"

I remember a nobleman, when seeing his own full length portrait in the exhibition, which had been painted by Sir Joshua, but was never paid for, expressed his surprize to a friend who was then in his company, that painters should complain of any want of employment—" See there," said he, " that portrait of myself, with many others in this room, proves they cannot want employment."

He used to say he could not dun persons for debts whom he was continually in the habit of meeting at dinner parties.

The regard of Reynolds for Michael Angelo,* has already been stated: another artist, of whom he always spoke with high respect, was Nicholas Poussin, although that painter was the very reverse to him in his practice; and I remember being in company with Sir Joshua and Sir William Chambers, one evening, when we had an argument on Poussin's merits. I expressed my surprize to find him so highly extol the excellencies of an artist that he was so totally unlike in his own practice, insomuch as to be absolutely the reverse, and added some opinions of my own, rather harsh, against the works of

---

* Mem. page 364.

Poussin, to which Sir Joshua would not agree; when Sir William Chambers smiled, and said I brought to his recollection the officious character which is always introduced to act a part when a saint is to be made by the Romish church. The office of this personage, who is supposed to be sent there purposely by the devil, and is therefore called the devil's advocate, is to seize every possible objection against the sanctity of the holy character that is to be canonized. He is of course to be confuted in all his arguments, to the greater glory of the new saint.

But in vindication of my sentiments in respect to Poussin, I shall here quote the authority of Mengs, as his opinion on this question precisely coincides with my own as far as it goes. He says, "Among the many who came to Rome, (meaning painters,) Nicholas Poussin was he who proposed to imitate entirely the style of the ancients; and if the customs of his age had not impeded him, he would have obtained his end. Painting always in oil small pieces, took from him the opportunity of enlarging his style, or of executing works of so much study as those of the first men of Italy. Considering, however, his *works only as sketches*, they are excellent."

Claude Lorraine also appears to have been a particular favourite painter in the estimation of Sir Joshua, as I have heard him say, that, in his opinion, the superiority of Claude in landscape was so pre-eminently excellent, that we might sooner expect to see another Raffaelle than another Claude Lorraine.

But as to the figures which he so frequently introduced into his pictures, those Sir Joshua did not approve of, but said,

that Claude in the attempt seemed, by his work, not to know what he was about.

Some further opinions of Sir Joshua may be drawn from the reverend Mr. Gilpin's Essays on Picturesque Beauty, (page 34,) who says, "As the subject of the foregoing Essay is rather new, and I doubted whether sufficiently founded in truth, I was desirous, before I printed it, that it should receive the imprimatur of Sir Joshua Reynolds, I begged him therefore to look it over, and received the following answer."

"DEAR SIR, *London, April* 19, 1791.

"Though I read now but little, yet I have read with great attention the Essay, which you were so good as to put into my hands, on the difference between the beautiful and the picturesque; and I may truly say I have received from it much pleasure and improvement.

"Without opposing any of your sentiments, it has suggested an idea that may be worth consideration, whether the epithet picturesque is not applicable to the excellence of the inferior schools rather than to the higher. The works of Michael Angelo, Raphael, &c. appear to me to have nothing of it; whereas Rubens and the Venetian painters may almost be said to have nothing else.

"Perhaps Picturesque is somewhat synonimous to the word Taste, which we should think improperly applied to Homer or to Milton, but very well to Pope or Prior. I suspect that the application of these words is to excellencies of an inferior order, and which are incompatible with the grand style.

"You are certainly right in saying, that variety in tints and forms is Picturesque; but it must be remembered, on the

other hand, that the reverse of this (uniformity of colour, and a long continuation of lines,) produces grandeur.

"I had an intention of pointing out the passages that particularly struck me; but I was afraid to use my eyes so much.

"The Essay has lain upon my table; and I think no day has passed without my looking at it, reading a little at a time.

"Whatever objections presented themselves at first view were done away on a closer inspection; and I am not quite sure but that is the case in regard to the observation which I have ventured to make on the word Picturesque.

"I am, &c.

"JOSHUA REYNOLDS."

The private exhibition of 1791 in the Haymarket * has been already mentioned, and some notice taken of it by a wicked wit, who, at the time, wished to insinuate that Sir Joshua was a partaker in the profits: but this was not the truth; neither do I believe there were any profits to share; however, these lines from Hudibras were inserted in a morning paper, together with some observations on the exhibition of pictures collected by the knight—

"A 'Squire he had whose name was Ralph,
Who in the adventure went his half."

Thus gaily making a sacrifice of truth to a joke.

The Catalogue to Ralph's Exhibition was written by Sir Joshua himself, in which some of the particular pictures are well described, and it contains a few remarks useful to painters; as for instance—

---

* Mem. page 368.

" No. 12. *Ludo. Carracci.*—A study of a head from the life, for a picture of St. Antonio, which is in the church of ——, in Bologna. In the finished picture, all the more minute parts which are here expressed are there omitted; the light part is one broad mass, and the scanty lock of hair which falls on the forehead, is there much fuller and larger. A copy of this picture seen at the same time with this study would be a good lesson to students, by shewing the different manner of painting a portrait and an historical head; and teach them at the same time the advantage of always having recourse to nature.

" No. 82. *Bassan—Sheep-shearing.*—At some distance, on a hill, with some difficulty, is seen the sacrifice of Isaac. This is a curious instance how little that school considered the art beyond colouring, and a representation of common nature; the sacrifice is here made secondary to the common occupations of husbandmen."

I insert his description of those two pictures of his collection, as sufficient to shew that Sir Joshua could not even barely describe a picture without its being in some degree a useful lesson.

My own observations, and those of others, respecting Reynolds's merits and practice, have been so diffusely noticed in the Memoirs, that little is left for a Supplement to contain, except that he rarely made any drawings, and the very few which he did produce cannot claim notice but from their great scarcity, and for being the work of so distinguished an artist. As to his Academy figures, it would be very difficult to collect a dozen specimens all together, and those few would be found to be poor and feeble.

When he found it necessary to make any sketches for his pictures, he always executed them in oil colours, in a very slight manner, merely to determine the general effect; but of those there are very few to be met with.

Of all the portrait painters who have hitherto flourished, there has been no one whose works were so well suited to that mode of engraving named mezzotinto as those of Reynolds, and a very large collection they make. A catalogue of them was arranged in the year 1794 by William Richardson, which formed a list of seven hundred prints, some of which are duplicates.

The prints from his works, which are chiefly in mezzotinto, certainly form the most numerous collection of portraits that have ever been engraved after the works of one artist.

I have heard Sir Joshua say that he believed he had covered more canvas than any painter that had gone before him: however, I much doubt this, as Rubens and Vandyke, in this particular, seem to be entitled to the palm: but certain it is, that he has painted two generations of the beauties of England, and in a few instances three.

Still it may be observed, that his application to his beloved art was such, that he seldom went out of his house in the daytime; and if by accident any circumstance obliged him to walk in the street at such hours, it seemed so strange to him, that, according to his own expression, he felt as if every body was looking at him.

If it were necessary to add any thing further on the merit of his discourses, which, unlike his paintings, were by some supposed not to be all his own, it may be found in part of an unfinished sketch for a Discourse which he had it in contem-

plation to compose, as has been before observed, and where he with great humility describes the kind of assistance which he supposed he had received from Dr. Johnson. But a man of genius is perpetually receiving assistance (if so we please to call it,) from every thing he hears or sees.

" I remember," he says, " Mr. Burke, speaking of the Essays of Sir Francis Bacon, said, he thought them the best of his works. Dr. Johnson was of opinion ' that their excellence and their value consisted in being the observations of a strong mind operating upon life ; and in consequence you find there what you seldom find in other books.'—It is this kind of excellence," he adds, " which gives a value to the performances of artists also. It is the thoughts expressed in the works of Michael Angelo, Corregio, Raffaelle, Parmegiano, and perhaps some of the old Gothic masters, and not the inventions of Pietro de Cortona, Carlo Maratti, Luca Giordano, and others that I might mention, which we seek after with avidity. From the former we learn to think originally. May I presume to introduce myself on this occasion, and even to mention as an instance of the truth of what I have remarked, the very Discourses which I have had the honour of delivering from this place. Whatever merit they may have must be imputed, in a great measure, to the education which I may be said to have had under Dr. Johnson. I do not mean to say, though it certainly would be to the credit of these Discourses, if I could say it with truth, that he contributed even a single sentiment to them ; but he qualified my mind to think justly."

To the account of his death, I have nothing to add. The following notice was given at the time of the sale of his own works in the daily papers, and may to many readers be interesting.

"SALE OF SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS'S PICTURES.

"These invaluable remains of the great master of the British School are 199 in number, portraits finished and unfinished—sketches and historical compositions, studies, &c. affording a complete view of his progressive merits, from his first rude beginnings to a degree of excellence which we may reasonably conjecture will not speedily be equalled.

"Mr. Greenwood's Room yesterday afforded also a secondary pleasure, which the moralist will best appreciate. Those living artists who have done most honour to their great and illustrious leader, attended with fond delay, to behold, for the last time together, his numerous and fascinating progeny.

"The magnets of the morning were—

The Death of Dido,	Cupid and Psyche,
The Infant Moses,	The Theory of the Arts,
The Duke and Duchess of Hamilton,	Mrs. Robinson,
	C. Greville,
St. John,	And a beginning of Puck,
Hope nursing Love,	Ugolino, a head, &c. &c.

Various spirited sketches of large pictures, and a more splendid example of taste and brilliant colouring than any gallery of a single artist can exhibit.

"It is no pleasing reflection, that the majority of the portraits consists of pictures by which the sitters hoped a kind of protracted existence, and which the parsimony and ingratitude of their heirs never redeemed, by paying up the remainder of the artist's price."

This seems to have been written merely with a view to assist the sale; but as it contains some information, I was unwilling to omit it.

The late display of the labours of this deceased ornament of Britain has already been detailed,* so that I have nothing further to observe, but that the monument to the memory of Sir Joshua Reynolds, executed by Mr. Flaxman, is now erected in St. Paul's cathedral, and makes one of the four statues which are placed immediately under the dome; the others being those of Dr. Johnson, Sir William Jones, and Mr. Howard.

It must be very gratifying to those who revere the memory of Sir Joshua to reflect, that so attractive were the excellencies of his works, without the aid of any newspaper paragraphs, &c. that the exhibition of them brought a very handsome sum of money to the proprietors of the rooms, and also raised the credit of the British School of Art: and we may rejoice to find, that this scheme having been so liberally encouraged by the people in general, the same project will be pursued, so that for a very small price to each individual, the public at large may view with patriotic exultation the admirable labours of their late illustrious painters, who have conferred lasting honour on their country.

It is also to be remarked that such exhibitions, if thus amply patronized by the nation, the profits from them, managed with skill and prudence, will enable the projectors of the scheme to lend a helping hand to forward the polite arts of England.

---

* Mem. page 408.

Institute of the Fine Arts.

Sir,

I have the honor to inform you that on the motion of Mr. Alfred D. Smith seconded by Mr. Edwin D. Smith you were on Saturday the 27th Inst. elected a Professional Member of the Institute.

I shall be obliged by your acknowledging the receipt of this, signifying your acquiescence in the Election.

The rooms of the Institute are open for the use of Members daily.

I am Sir,
Your obedient Servant,
Jane Mackay
Secretary.

To
J. Durieux Esqui
March 1st 1847
49 Great Marlborough Street.

Carlo Maratti used to say, that he considered himself as the heir of the Caracchi, and therefore demanded the high prices for his works which his great predecessors ought to have been paid, but could not obtain.

In like manner, the large sum received from exhibiting the works of those lamented, excellent painters, our compatriots, if bestowed with judgment on the living artists, will thus constitute them heirs of their unrewarded predecessors.

INDEX TO THE SUPPLEMENT.

INTERESTING NEW WORKS,

PUBLISHED BY HENRY COLBURN, CONDUIT-STREET, LONDON.

THE NEW MONTHLY MAGAZINE, *and* LITERARY REGISTER.

This interesting Miscellany, the first Number of which was published on the 1st of February, 1814, is printed in octavo, on good paper, with a clear type. Each Number contains six sheets, comprehending a quantity of matter exceeding an ordinary octavo volume of three hundred pages. Price only 2s. (forming a most acceptable present to friends abroad, to whom it may be regularly sent by applying to any Postmaster.)

The following abstract of its contents will enable the Public to form some idea of the comprehensive nature of its Plan.

1. Original Communications on various Subjects.—2. Interesting Extracts from New Works, Foreign as well as English.—3. The Literary Cabinet, consisting of curious Anecdotes, Fragments, &c.—4. Memoirs of Eminent Persons, living and deceased.—5. Intelligence in Literature and the Arts and Sciences, including Transactions of Public Societies, Dramatic Review, &c.—6. Poetry, original and selected.—7. New Acts of Parliament, and remarkable Law Proceedings.—8. Abstracts of Parliamentary Reports, and other Documents of general interest.—9. Remarkable Events, Promotions, Births, Marriages, and Deaths, at Home and Abroad.—10. Historical Digest of Political Affairs.—11. Reports—Commercial, Agricultural, Chemical, Meteorological, Naturalist's, &c.

Preparing for Publication, to be continued annually,

2. THE LITERARY AND SCIENTIFIC CALENDER OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE, FOR THE YEARS 1814-15.

Containing—1. The Biographical Dictionary of all Living Authors, Male and Female, (announced for some time past) with a complete List of their Works in order of Publication.—2. A similar Dictionary of Painters, Engravers, Sculptors, and Musical Composers.—3. A Register of all the Universities and Public Schools, with Lists of the Heads of Colleges, Professors, Tutors, Masters, &c. promotions and appointments, Prize Questions, and other interesting particulars.—4. An account of all the Public Societies, Institutions, Libraries, and Exhibitions for the Promotion of Literature and the Arts and Science, in every part of the United Kingdom; their Officers; an abstract of their Proceedings, Lectures, &c. during the preceding year.—5. Articles of Intelligence on every Subject connected with Literature, Science, and the Arts; including new Projects, Improvements, Inventions, Patents, &c.—6. Biographical Sketches of eminent Literary Characters, Artists, and Men of Science, deceased in 1813. To which will be added, a complete Catalogue of English Books, Music, and Prints, published during the year, and of new Foreign Works imported.—A List of the principal Booksellers, especially of such as possess valuable Collections; also of the Music and Printsellers, and various other useful Tables, &c.

The Friends to this Undertaking, and particularly Authors, Artists, Directors and Secretaries to Literary Institutions, Booksellers, &c. are earnestly solicited to favour the Editor with any authentic information they may possess, which is requested to be addressed as early as possible (free of postage) to the Publisher, Mr. Colburn, Public Library, 50, Conduit-street, Hanover-square, London.

3. AN AUTHENTIC NARRATIVE of the INVASION of FRANCE in 1814. By M. De BEAUCHAMP, author of "The History of the War of La Vendée."

The political and military annals of nations have never supplied such interesting subjects for the contemplation of mankind as are united in the description of this astonishing epoch, in which are exhibited the most memorable events and the most affecting incidents that were ever produced by the sword of war or recorded by the pen of history.

4. HISTORY of the WAR in SPAIN and PORTUGAL, from 1807 to 1814. By GENERAL SARRAZIN, one of the Commanders of the Legion of Honour. Illustrated with a Map, exhibiting the Routes of the various Armies. 8vo. 12s.

A more luminous view of the great scenes which occurred in Spain and Portugal will not easily be found, and it is but justice to the author to say, that while he has detailed the operations with the perspicuity of a man of science, he has treated the Commanders on both sides with great impartiality.—*New Monthly Magazine.*

5. MEMOIRS of LADY HAMILTON, drawn from original sources, and comprising many new and authentic Anecdotes of various distinguished Personages; among whom are the King and Queen of Sicily, Sir William Hamilton, the late Lord and the present Earl Nelson, the Earl of Bristol, the Duke of Queensberry, &c. &c. In one vol. small 8vo. embellished with a fine Portrait, by Meyer, from an original Painting by Romney.

6. SECRET MEMOIRS of NAPOLEON BUONAPARTE. Written by one who never quitted him for fifteen years. 2d edit. 12mo. 12s.

This work has created an extraordinary sensation in Paris. It contains an infinite number of private Anecdotes—describes him in his retirement, in his fits of passion, in his artifices, and in all his various positions of the Field and the Cabinet—in society and in his Chamber. To this edition is subjoined, 1. An Historical Survey of the Character of this extraordinary personage, drawn from his own words and actions. 2. The Itinerary of Buonaparte from the period of his residence at Fontainbleau to his establishment on the Island of Elba, and, 3. An account of the Regency at Blois; with many curious and authentic Anecdotes.

N. B. These additions are also sold separately to complete the former edition.

7. MARIA, or, THE HOLLANDERS. By LOUIS BUONAPARTE. 3 vols. 16s. 6d.
Ditto, in French, 12s.

8. RECOLLECTIONS of ITALY, ENGLAND, and AMERICA. By F. A. DE CHATEAUBRIAND. 1 vol. 8vo.

9. AN HISTORICAL, POLITICAL, and MORAL ESSAY on REVOLUTIONS, Ancient and Modern. By the same distinguished Author. 1 vol. 8vo.

10. MEMOIRS and CONFESSIONS of THOMAS ASHE, Esq. Author of "The Spirit of the Book," &c. &c. containing Anecdotes and Facts relative to the most distinguished Characters of the day.

11. THE NEW BRITISH THEATRE: a Selection of ORIGINAL DRAMAS not yet acted, with CRITICAL REMARKS by the Editor: in 4 vols. 8vo. 2l. 2s. boards; or in 16 Numbers, at 2s. 6d. each; any of which may at present be had separately; and the Public are advised to complete their Sets as soon as possible, to prevent disappointment.

12. O'DONNEL: a NATIONAL TALE. By LADY MORGAN, (late MISS OWENSON,) Author of "The Wild Irish Girl, Novice of St. Dominick," &c. &c. 2d edition. 3 vol. 21s.

13. MEMOIRS of GEO. FRED. COOKE, ESQ. late of the Theatre Royal, Covent-Garden. By W. DUNLAP, ESQ. in 2 vols. 8vo. with a fine Portrait from an original Miniature, 21s. bds.

We have seldom been more amused and instructed than by the perusal of these volumes. The characteristic singularity of the adventures they record, the lively sketches of the individuals connected with the dramatic art, and the impressive lessons to be derived from the Journal of Cooke himself, all conspire to awaken the curiosity of the lounger, and to command the interest of the philosophic observer of life and manners.—*Theatrical Inquisitor*, Oct.

14. MEMOIRS and CORRESPONDENCE of BARON DE GRIMM and DIDEROT, from the Years 1753 to 1790. Translated from the French, the second edition, in 4 large vols. 8vo. price 2l. 16s. in bds. The French edition forms 7 vols. price 4l. 18s.

For some account of this highly curious and interesting work, see the Edinburgh and Quarterly Reviews.

15. MUSICAL BIOGRAPHY; or, Memoirs of the Lives and Writings of the most eminent MUSICAL COMPOSERS and WRITERS who have flourished in the different Countries of Europe during the last three Centuries, including the Memoirs of many who are now living. In 2 vols. 8vo. 24s. bds.

In the execution of this work, it has been the intention of the Author to supply the lovers and professors of Music with such anecdotes of the lives, and such observations on the writings, printed and manuscript, of eminent masters, as may not only afford information and amusement, but may also serve as a guide in purchasing their works.

16. MEMOIRS of GOLDONI (the celebrated Italian Dramatist) written by himself.—Translated from the original French by JOHN BLACK, 2 vols. 8vo. price 21s. Ditto in French.

Gibbon, the Historian, has pronounced the Memoirs of Goldoni to be more truly dramatic than his comedies. Lord Byron has also pronounced the life of Goldoni to be one of the best specimens of auto-biography. It is replete with anecdotes of the most distinguished persons.

17. MEMOIRS of PRINCE POTEMKIN, Field-Marshal, Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Armies, Knight, &c. A work replete with curious and interesting Anecdotes of the Russian Court, second edition, with Portrait, 9s.

18. KLOPSTOCK and HIS FRIENDS. A series of Letters written between the Years 1750 and 1803. From the German, with a Biographical Introduction, by MISS BENGER, forming a Sequel to Miss Smith's Life of Klopstock. 1 vol. 8vo. 10s. 6d.

19. INTRODUCTION to the MEMOIRS of PRINCE EUGENE of SAVOY. Containing private Anecdotes of the Prince's Family, and other celebrated Characters, with Notes, Historical, Military, and Political, 8vo. 3s. 6d.

20. TRAVELS THROUGH NORWAY and LAPLAND, in the Years 1806, 7, and 8. By LEOPOLD VON BUCH, Member of the Royal Academy of Sciences at Berlin. Translated from the German by JOHN BLACK. With Notes, and some Account of the Author, by PROFESSOR JAMESON. 4to. with Maps. 1l. 16s. bds.

Von Buch, like the celebrated Humboldt, is a Prussian, and a man of sense, enterprise, and observation. His Travels through Norway and Lapland contain much curious and valuable information.—*Edinburgh Review.*

21. VOYAGES AND TRAVELS IN VARIOUS PARTS OF THE WORLD, during the Years 1803, 4, 5, 6, and 7. By G. VON LANGSDORFF, Aulic Counsellor to his Majesty the Emperor of Russia, Consul General at the Brazils, &c. in 2 handsome vols. 4to. with 21 Engravings and a Map. Price 4l. 10s. in bds.

Vol. 1. contains the Voyage to Brazil, the South Sea, Kamschatka, and Japan. 2. the Voyage to the Aleutian Islands and North-west Coast of America, and Return by Land over the North-east Parts of Asia, through Siberia to Petersburgh.

The Second Volume is sold separately, Price 1*l.* 17*s.* 6*d.* boards.

For an account of this valuable and interesting Voyage round the World.—See the British Critic, &c.

22. TRAVELS IN THE MOREA, ALBANIA, and other Parts of the OTTOMAN EMPIRE. By F. C. POUQUEVILLE, M. D. Member of the Commission of Arts and Sciences, and French Resident at Janina. Translated by ANNE PLUMPTRE. With Engravings. 2l. 2s. bds.

This volume will be found highly curious and valuable, being collected by the author during a long residence in these interesting countries, and describing at large their productions, the manners, customs, religion, and commerce of the inhabitants, &c. &c.

23. LETTERS from the MEDITERRANEAN, containing a civil and political Account of SICILY, TRIPOLY, TUNIS, and MALTA, with Biographical Sketches, Anecdotes, and Observations, illustrative of the present State of those Countries, and their relative Situation with respect to the British Empire. By EDWARD BLAQUIERE, Esq. 2 large vols. 8vo. with Maps. Price 28s.

Mr. Blaquiere has produced an interesting and considerably important Work.—(Eclec. Rev.)

Mr. Blaquiere has given a more minute, full, and entertaining picture of these countries than any of his competitors.—(Edinburgh Rev. 43.)

24. TRAVELS in the CAUCASUS and GEORGIA, during the Years 1807 and 1808. Performed by Command of the Russian Government. By JULIUS VON KLAPROTH, Aulic Counsellor to his Majesty the Emperor of Russia, Member of the Imperial Academy of Sciences at St. Petersburgh, &c. 4to. Price 2l. 2s. boards.

M. Klaproth is entitled to the most unqualified praise for his exertions, and for the important information which he has collected; and we promise those who may be inclined to peruse this work, that they will be rewarded by much amusement and instruction.—(North Brit. Rev. No. 2.)

25. SICILY AND ITS INHABITANTS. Observations made during a Residence in that Country in the Years 1809—10. By W. H. THOMPSON, ESQ. 4to. with Engravings, 31s. 6d. boards.

26. TRAVELS in SOUTHERN AFRICA, in the Years 1803, 4, 5, and 6, by PROFESSOR LICHTENSTEIN, in 2 vols. 4to. with a valuable Map and numerous Engravings.

N. B. The second volume just published is sold separately.

27. TRAVELS in GREECE, PALESTINE, EGYPT, and BARBARY, during the Years 1806 and 1807, by F. A. DE CHATEAUBRIAND. 2nd Edition, 2 vols. 8vo. price 28s. Ditto in French 24s.

28. THE BEAUTIES of CHRISTIANITY, by F. A. DE CHATEAUBRIAND, Author of "Travels in Greece and Palestine," "Atala," &c. with a Preface and Notes by the Rev. HENRY KETT, B. D. Fellow of Trinity College, Oxford. In 3 vols. 8vo. price 31s. 6d. boards. Ditto in French.

This work is universally acknowledged to be the *chef-d'œuvre* of its learned author. It altogether presents a display of one of the most extensive, the grandest, and the most interesting prospects that can engage the attention.

J. Gillet, Printer, Crown-court, Fleet-street, London.